USES OF ADVERSITY

Chas. W. Collins

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THE USES OF ADVERSITY AND OTHER ESSAYS

CHARLES W. COLLINS

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By whom these little papers were

First given a welcome in the columns of

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Gratitude and thanks

For past encouragement and for their present

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Are hereby acknowledged

By the Author.

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FOREWORD.

CHESTERTON, writing of the "Toy Theatre" remarks that "the most interesting thing about the theatrical art is that the spectator sees the whole thing through a window."

The most interesting thing about life is that the spectator sees it through two small windows which, though limiting his range, provide in turn a wealth of detail and a vista of boundless variety and charm. The moving procession, the still background have, of course, an objective reality; but each individual brings to the survey a store of memories and a mental viewpoint all his own.

This mental refraction and coloring of personality have two important consequences for human knowledge and literature: they thwart the formation of a complete and accurate mass of data on such topics as science and history, but, on the other hand, they endow mankind with the inexhaustible riches of imagination and independent thought. Science is as unreliable as the sea. History, even when treating of contemporaneous events, is one-sided and fragmentary and becomes the more vague and misleading

according to the remoteness of the period studied.

Contrast with this the imagery and music of the poet, the multitude of characters springing from the brain of the novelist, the flashing power and far horizon of the philosopher; all because each, whatever his gifts or bent, looks out upon the world and humanity through two small windows and beholds what is given no other in the whole universe to see just as he sees it.

The reminiscences of the policeman, the ideas of the car-conductor, the philosophy of "the man on the street" have a real value as well as those of the men and women to whom the world listens with bated breath for each has a story to tell that is unique. The pity is, that while the vision and the thought are universal, the faculty of adequate and sincere expression is given to few.

The above then is the Apologia for this book or, if you will, this series of glimpses at life. It brings no new message. It preaches no gospel. It solves no problems. But it has this title to existence, a title like the "key of the fields" for those who seek it. It is a human document, things seen by the Looker-On through his two small windows.

THE USES OF ADVERSITY.

ADVERSITY is like the Angel with whom Jacob wrestled. It blesses those who strive against it. Men ever sigh for wealth and ease, twin foes of individuals and States. No one yearns for adversity though its stroke is beneficent. Few strong, true men are overborne by trials; they rise above them purified and strengthened, but myriads of giant souls have succumbed to the Circean spell of prosperity and under it have forgotten manhood and honor. Men like moths love to hover around the flame that will wither them.

The great empires, the mighty nations that endured long and won great glory, were nurtured in the hard cradle of self-denial, extended their confines by discipline and economy and went to ruin through excessive wealth and the enervation that follows in its train. Had the Napoleon of Waterloo been the Napoleon of

Marengo and Lodi the history of Europe would be different today.

No soft-handed people unaccustomed to braving the elements and the savage could have torn America from England's grasp and built up this Republic. The colonist in the Western wilderness prepared himself in adversity for the conflict that brought this nation into being. Nor could England herself have come to her present position or retained the colonies that are now hers had not her sons preserved a good modicum of that discipline and fortitude in hardship by which her empire has been built up and maintained.

Persecuted peoples are the hardiest. They may lose their national identity but they will win in every clime. The Jews have ceaselessly borne for thousands of years every variety of misfortune, the Land of Promise has passed from them, they are exiles; yet in every civilized land they constitute a minority strong out of all proportion with their numbers.

The Irish people ground for centuries under the heel of an atrocious tyranny have not been annihilated by it but

strengthened. They have made their mark in every nation under the sun. They are in the van of progress throughout the world. Wherever you find a man of might and kindness, a man of eloquence and practicalness, a man who will ride into the jaws of death unterrified or sway thousands with the magic of his voice, you may be sure that he is at least in part an Irishman.

England persecuted Ireland, yet in that persecution she has been the means of breeding a type of man which the world had never known before.

The men whose names are writ large across the pages of the Nineteenth Century and those who stand today the accredited leaders in every sphere of activity were not cradled in the lap of luxury, but imbibed the energy that made them what they are, from the hard breast of that severe nurse, Adversity.

Read their biographies and you will find that they were brought up in small houses, with scanty food, that they wrested education from life, that they fought every step of their way up the heights; and if

their faces are a bit grim and their hearts somewhat seared, we should not wonder, for these scarred warriors have come through a hundred battles.

Watch workmen flinging coal or rock against a screen. The larger lumps resist the impact and remain outside, the smaller ones pass through the coarse wires, next against a screen of closer meshes and so on until the different sizes are distributed. So are men flung against the screen of life. Those of strong character and intelligence resist the impact and take the first places. Lesser men are sifted through the graduated series of meshes of the life-screen until they reach their allotted place and field of usefulness or uselessness. It is the shock, the impact, that proves their quality.

Perfection comes through pain or something analogous to pain. Marble is hewn into the statue by the blows of the chisel and the mallet, the diamond is cut and polished into glittering facets by keen instruments and the remorseless wheel, the dream of the architect comes into being only when stones torn from the hillside

are cut into symmetry by ceaseless blows, when trees shorn of their dignity and foliage are sawed and planed into proper dimensions.

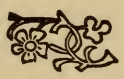
The laughing child, the smooth-browed youth and maiden, have that beauty of Nature about them that we see in the blooming meadow and the quiet forest; but it is only when time, experience and adversity have written their record on the brow and the brain behind it that men and women reach their true maturity of character.

Uniformly through created things from the lowest to the highest works the inexorable law that the worth of man as the worth of things must be shown forth through bitterness and pain. Life does to the soul of man what civilization and its works do to inanimate Nature — tears, cuts and smooths it to beauty and usefulness by hard blows.

Adversity alone strengthens. The ancient pagan saw that life was hard, steeled his soul and worked on. The modern pagan does the same. But man is more

than a beast and there is not equity in this view of life.

Christ has blessed adversity; glorified it with a halo that is His own. He first went up that awful road that leads to the Cross and proved to men that the path of adversity is the way to Heaven; that it is only through pain, sorrow and death that we come to the only victory and only peace that are worth striving for by the sons of men.



THE BLESSING OF NECESSITY.

MOST of the best work that men have done in this world was done because they had to do it. It matters little whether the necessity was material or psychological; whether it was that they must succeed or starve, or were impelled to action by a mysterious law of their souls. However we reason it out, for them there was no middle course, no alternative; they were compelled to labor, ponder, improve until their work was complete and flawless.

Of course, there is this great difference between the work that is done by men to gain bread or pay a debt, and that which is the result of an inward conviction that they are the bearers of a message which they must deliver in the most perfect and enduring form; one is accidental, the other a part of the man. But the result in each case is the same. Necessity is the motive power.

How often we see men with every gift except energy! All their ability is palsied by incorrigible indolence. They put off the time of exertion from day to day and daily the potentiality evaporates. Finally, there comes the time when their eyes are opened, but their hands are powerless, and then comes bitter pessimism.

What a curse is laziness! It robs the most gifted man of the power of production. It makes of him who might have been an ornament of his age, a benefactor of his kind, an honor to his family, nothing but a useless hulk. Fortunate is the man congenitally lazy whom hard necessity or the irresistable impulse from within, pushes on to accomplishment. Necessity has redeemed him.

Look at the crowds content to gain a livelihood, earn enough for food, buy pleasure and nothing more. Look at the hosts of men with intelligence and education who accomplish nothing and sink to the level of the illiterate toiler. There can be no question that in the multitude is extraordinary ability, which under happier conditions with more inward force, might

have won all the rewards that life holds out to him who strives.

Consider the inventions that have revolutionized life in modern times. Not one of these marvellous machines has been evolved except at the expense of sleepless nights, laborious days, monastic self-denial and a perseverance all but incredible. These inventors were possessed by their message. They could not but keep on until it had been delivered to mankind in the best form they could give to it. Necessity compelled them.

Consider the architects of the modern fabulous fortunes. Prescinding from the morality of their methods, the amount of work the producers of these fortunes have performed staggers belief. As an example of what human ability and iron will can do, it stands apart in the annals of mankind. Almost every one of these men started at the bottom and forced his way into power by herculean struggles. What power urged them on?

The men who have done great things in our land in statesmanship, in the professions, who stand today the leaders of the

nation, have worked harder and more constantly than the laborer in the trench. Progress in these lines is never easy. There is but one way to the top, that of hard, gruelling work. Would these men have condemned themselves to careers of ceaseless toil, not only to gain a place, but having gained, to hold it, unless they felt they had to? I trow not.

Go over the long list of scientists who have wrung from Nature her deeply hidden secrets, who have found out the enemies of the human system in the blood and tissues, who have lengthened the span of life for millions and given to humanity a working and winning force that otherwise would have been a dream. They have done all these things on the spur of necessity. Whether they worked for mankind, for fame, or for wealth, need not concern us: they have proved themselves overpowering benefactors to men. These blessings we would not have, had not necessity compelled the discoverers to go on until the result was achieved.

Consider the great books that men have written for the instruction and enjoyment

of their contemporaries and posterity. Hardly one of these but was rewritten scores of times, pondered and polished until they were masterpieces. It is an intolerable labor, yet scholars and artists will do it until the end of the world, because they must do it.

Finally, the highest and most important work that men have before them in life is the salvation of their souls. If they "scorn delights and live laborious days," fast, pray, scourge their bodies by mortification, tell themselves that life is short and eternity long, that pleasure deludes and the world is a snare, and use up the power of their souls that they may develop in those souls spirituality, that cleanness of heart without which we cannot see God, we can be sure they suffer and do all these things, because they are convinced to the innermost fibre of their beings, that they must do so or die the eternal death.

Yes, necessity is indeed a blessing to mankind. Let those, therefore, whose lives are hard and duties endless and responsibilities without number, cease repin-

ing and be thankful that such is their lot, for they are the most fortunate of mankind. Without work there is nothing, and there is no lasting work, no enduring accomplishment that is not born of that hard-featured, yet kind-hearted and wise mother, Necessity.

THE FUTILITY OF BITTERNESS.

AN AUTHOR, whose books have delighted thousands, met with a great sorrow, one sufficient to shadow forever the life of an ordinary man. I often wondered how it would affect his work. Some weeks ago a short story from his pen was published, a little tale so sprightly, so deftly told and shot through with sunshine, that I marvelled he could produce it even under the happiest circumstances.

I sent my congratulations, adding that I was glad to see that trouble had not embittered him. At the end of his characteristic letter, he set down these words: "I do not understand embitterment as the result of anything." That phrase has given me food for thought ever since.

How pitifully often do we see men and women of more than average ability, people who are valuable to the community, giving away beneath a stroke of misfortune and allowing it to render them cyni-

cal and discouraged. Metaphorically they throw up their hands as if fate had ruined their lives and relieved them from further effort. What a detestable obsession; what moral cowardice! The children of men have been suffering these blows since the expulsion from Eden. Most of what we enjoy in the intellectual sphere as well as in material comfort, we owe to the period after the calamity in each life, the fruits of dauntless struggle, the victory gained amid the throes of mental or physical pain.

Milton wrote his great poem after he was stricken with blindness. Carlyle forged his massive productions in the agony of dyspepsia. Stevenson labored over those classics he has given us, with the grisly specter of consumption ever before him. It is not necessary to accumulate instances—each reader can easily compile his own list. But the lesson in all such cases is the same. The test was there, coming in one form or another, and they worthily passed it and went on to do their appointed work with the best energy that was in them.

During long railroad journeys I have often noticed the barren marshes near the sea. Years do not change them. There they are with their useless crop of swamp grass, a misery even to the eye of the traveler. There are dispositions like those salt marshes. The individuals have in many cases had hard lots, much labor, frequent disappointments—and these have soured them. They view each acquaintance acridly, they have nothing good to say of anyone, they seem to take a fearful joy in the misfortunes of others, as if in some diabolical fashion these fed the fires of resentment.

You meet such a person; his cynicism makes its impression; you go your way. You return after five or ten years. Every day in those years has been marked in your memory by death, bereavement, financial trouble, pitiful cases of disease, and you feel a great compassion for the suffering, and admiration for courage under dire distress. Those years likewise have been marked by countless triumphs in the spiritual, intellectual and material world. Men have accomplished

much for the glory and improvement of mankind. Heroism has shone forth, great works of the mind produced, wonderful structures raised, chasms spanned, science has gone forward with mighty strides. With these thoughts in your mind, you encounter the old acquaintance. Not a change! The same sour grimace, the same mordant comment, the same unholy glee that another soul is suffering. Human salt marsh!

You are on a journey and the train nears a point that has always been distasteful to you. It was sterile, neglected, offensive to sight and smell. You stare in amazement. Has Aladdin's genie been at work? Instead of noisesome pools, rubbish-strewn land and snarling profanity, there are trim lawns and flowers, well-kept houses and children laughing and desporting on the grass. It took hard work to effect that transformation, but how beautifully worth while it was. Thus too, grace and courage transform unpleasant dispositions, when their possessors eschew selfishness and make up their minds to be of use to their neighbors.

The fact is, embitterment is synonymous with selfishness; concentrated, unreasonable selfishness. It is individual nihilism. They who give it domain over them in effect say: "If I cannot have health, ease of mind and the good things of life, I shall do my best to keep them from others and when I cannot do that, I shall exert myself to spoil their enjoyment." Of course, this is not all conscious. Much of it is entirely unconscious. It can co-exist with a measure of exterior devotion. The victims are let alone as a rule. People recognize that such cases are generally incurable and do not risk their peace of mind and perhaps reputations by expostulations. It takes a stout heart to reclaim a salt marsh.

But what a living encouragement, what a trumpet note of power is sent forth by those who cause men to rub their eyes and lift their heads and take heart again at indomitable cheerfulness and spirits only ennobled by pain and sorrow! Such rare souls do not realize the good they do, but they will one day when good deeds are counted. Meanwhile as a bit of sane phil-

osophy, think over my friend's remark: "I do not understand embitterment as the result of anything."

GREAT AND LITTLE MEN.

SOME men are moulded intellectually on large lines and for good or ill are destined to play a controlling part in the affairs of the world. They are few, and it is better so, for otherwise the earth would be a battle-ground of Titans.

Other men—and they are the great majority—are cast in a small mould and are unable to do much good or harm. This, too, is providential, for the labor of the world must be performed by a multitude of small men, each working in his own place and doing his part.

It has always been so from the beginning of history and under all kinds of government. It is a fixed and immutable law that a few, stronger, wiser and more energetic than their neighbors, shall dominate, while the rest shall be dominated. It is the hierarchy of ability which no man can disestablish.

Men of extraordinary power and energy are urged on by the force of genius. Theirs is the unerring insight, the breadth of outlook, the capacity for doing things by wholesale and commanding the situation at a glance.

They cannot be men of details, for details eat time, yet they must possess the gift of comprehending details in the flash of an eye. The commander of an army or the head of a giant corporation cannot burden his memory or waste his days with the thousand small things which, for all their smallness, must be well and faithfully done. He selects others to look after such things, and on the accuracy of this selection depends the success of the leader. Moreover he must imbue with his own spirit those who work for him that he may see with a hundred eyes and act with a hundred hands, for there is much to do and the time is short.

It matters little in what century or in what circumstances a great man is born. He grasps events and sways them. He comes to his own by inalienable right. No

one may lift the sword Excalibur except Arthur. But he pays a high price for this. He knows little peace. It is his lot to be criticized unsparingly, for he cannot be overlooked. Like St. Peter's or the Colosseum, great men fill the eye of the beholder; their lightest word is remembered, their smallest act recorded, their slightest failing the theme of endless comment. Thus it is that every man of power goes into history maligned and vilified, for he becomes a shibboleth and stirs the passions of his time.

Small men are blessed in their limitations. They are content in a narrow field, happy in simple duties and pleasures. They are spared the call of action, the spur of ambition and the tongue of calumny. It is their good fortune to be fashioned for the quality of the work they do and the places they must fill, and, if we look at life from the standpoint of contentment, they are doubtless the happiest people in the world. Were they to be raised to high places they would die of misery, for, though they would not lack

abuse from others, their most merciless critics would be themselves. So they gravitate into their allotted places and fulfil the law of their being.

Sometimes, however, small men fancy they possess eminent ability and grasp and, like the luckless frog who would vie with the elephant, burst themselves with striving. Once in a while some man of meager mental equipment whose sole large quality is self-conceit is lifted by chance or unwise friends into high position, and his frantic attempts to meet its requirements are painfully grotesque. The public laughs and winks, but he notices nothing. Like the demented individual who imagines himself an emperor, the conceited small man in great place is happy in his delusion, a self-admirer with few rivals, a petty paranoiac. But all this is exceedingly unfortunate for others. They pay the full vicarious penalty for his mistakes, his posing, his unfitness. The very incongruity of the situation is painful.

Most communities are afflicted with small men in important offices. This is

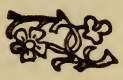
one of the main reasons why villainy thrives, needed work remains undone, and time and money are wasted. Happily, under democratic government there is a chance of getting rid of the incubus. Sometimes, however, he is a life-incumbent and then it is that the wide range of his deficiencies is disclosed and the full measure of his costliness realized.

The greatest men cannot do all things well. No one can satisfy the whole public. Life at best is a series of experiments and compromises and even the wisest and most far-sighted make their mistakes. But these mistakes are valuable and the public reaps the benefit. Such drawbacks are to be expected in human nature and throw into higher relief what is well accomplished.

When great positions are greatly filled, the affairs of the community are properly and intelligently administered, needed reforms instituted and public confidence maintained. The very fallibility and natural human weaknesses of the gifted administrator and tribune of the people

draw men to him by the cords of Adam. Through the ruck and seeming confusion of action the purpose of the great leader is gradually revealed until finally men rub their eyes and realize that the right hand is at the helm—though sometimes this recognition does not come until the helmsman is cold in death. But it must come in time, for truth is mighty and shall prevail and the common judgment of men is finally right.

"The evil that men do lives after them; the good is oft interred with their bones," said the poet. But in the case of really great men the reverse is true; their frailties are laid away in the coffin, but what they have won for their brethren lives on and works beneficence. The new provinces annexed, the discoveries perfected, the wise government established, the boundless legacies of genius, are the property of mankind. The great man dies when his time comes, but humanity thrives and wins.



THE MIRAGE.

WANT to get out," said the starling. This is not a world of contented people. Nearly every one finds his lot in life unsatisfactory and wastes time in vain regrets. He magnifies his own troubles and minimizes those of his neighbors. If you could look into the hearts of those about you, it would be found that almost all are in the same condition as yourself, beating their soul wings against the bars of circumstance, like the starling. Each human being is in his own cage and the world is a huge cage around them all. Analyze the situation.

Take the monarch. He is the prize prissoner. Birth, etiquette, precedent, foreign relations are the bars of his cage. Of course he wants to get out. Those who have tried it by abdication have found themselves living in an environment for which they were not fitted. He is born in captivity and freedom is not for him. Take the millionaire, the rich business

man. Responsibilities, plans, the plots of rivals, the fluctuations of the market are the bars of his cage. He may long for the old home where his boyhood was spent and desire to confront the world care free. Impossible. The myriad threads of affairs hold him down as the Lilliputians held Gulliver. He cannot get away. Take the average man. He is snugly ensconced in his own particular cage. Bread and butter, the welfare of his family are contingent on his close application to the work before him. Of course he would like to go forth to strange lands, have plenty of money and no anxieties. He may as well dream of owning empires. He is caged.

But perhaps the tramp and the gipsy are free. They go where they like, without worries or family ties. Yes, and they frequently go to the prosaic and very practical lock-up. They carry their cages. They are ambulatory prisoners. Then again they are pariahs. Every man's hand is against them. Jack London's stories will not tempt many boys to take up tramping as a quest for happiness. Still, we cannot deny it; the longing is there in high and

low. Humanity re-echoes the cry of the starling: "I want to get out."

Let us study this longing. The anatomists find in the human body certain organs whose usefulness is obscure, like the appendix, which seems to menace its host with death. They call these rudimentary organs. They say that these once had a function, but changed conditions have eliminated that function. It may be, I speak in all humility, that this universal longing is a rudimentary soul function which had its exercise before Adam fell. Though human nature is weakened and debased, perhaps it still conserves that faculty for enjoyment granted to our First Parents when the Lord placed them in Paradise, and this terrible longing is only part of our punishment. However, here we are, each in his cage. What are we going to do about it?

It is a consolation to know that the cage is the common lot of all. Much of our trouble comes from the error that we alone are confined and others are free. No one is free. It is merely a matter of cages. Secondly, let us distrust the imagination.

Like fire it is a good servant but a bad master. The dream city is very fair, with its glistening towers and fairy palaces rising on the far horizon, but no one can live in it. It is a tantalizing allurement. The poets and romancers have a heavy account to render for unfitting mankind for the world in which life must be lived. There is no Arcadia except in poesy. "Shepherds all and maidens fair" is very pretty and very impractical. They are dream shepherds and dream maidens. The mind must come back after the dream, tenfold saddened for the fugitive peep into a fairyland which cannot be ours.

We make fun of Betty, the cook, as she pores over stories of handsome heroes and grand ladies sauntering and love-making in great houses. We laugh as we see her enrapt and fancying herself one of that charmed circle. Betty ought to be doing her washing or cleaning her dishes instead of mingling in fancy with that gay throng. Doubtless. But are not we as ludicrous, closing our eyes to our blessings and consolations, and wishing ourselves in other people's shoes?

Betty may be silly, but not one whit more than we. The only difference is that her surroundings make the picture more grotesque. Contentment lies along the path of duty. We cannot attain it by by-paths. The digression procures for us only scratches and contusions. Keep to the road.

What is the use of denying facts and shutting our eyes like children, of running after every will-o'-the-wisp that may lead us only to sorrow and disillusion!

God has placed us in a world just fair enough to be unsatisfactory, to make us long for a fairer world. He so intended it. The longing that besets us, whether we acknowledge it or not, is a longing for Heaven. God alone can satisfy the heart of man. Let us therefore wait for Him, taking life cheerfully and bravely. When the longing to be free comes, let us think of that heavenly country where the soul will enjoy its fullest exercise. When the dream city shines before our eyes on the far horizon, let us take it as an omen and a forecast of that Celestial City prepared for our eternal dwelling. We shall all get

out one day, but our ultimate freedom depends on facing life nobly in the cage.

SARCASM.

THAT spiteful sprite visits the cradles of many gifted men and adds to the talents with which kindly nature endows them, the one fatal gift too many, sarcastic wit! It has wrecked the careers and embittered the days of hundreds who might have done much with their lives. They seemed to have every quality of leadership except one. Their bitter tongues alienated those who might have been their devoted liegemen, stung sensitive acquaintances to life-long enmity and bred distrust and dislike in the public generally. There is no need to call the roll of the brilliant spirits who threw away the hopes of a life-time and the certainty of long and fruitful service for the sake of sharp epigrams. They were the victims of their own vanity.

People enjoy a stinging retort, a bitter jest, when they are not the target. A faculty for sarcastic abuse is an asset to a

political party, but the party members do not like the man of jibes a whit the better for using him, and bring their confidence and respect to the slow, kindly neighbor who speaks plain words. They do not demand that their leaders be "fellows of infinite jest," and are satisfied with earnestness and seriousness. The solemn, statesmanlike pose is often overdone, but the popularity of the counterfeit only proves the value of the reality.

Wise leaders of men are as careful about the use of wit and sarcasm as the reliable contractor is of high-power explosives. There are times when these must be employed as there are times when dynamite must be used to save a burning city, but these occasions are rare. Men will bear with violence and temper and even a degree of bullying, for masterful men have had the trick of imperiousness since the world began. The soreness caused by hard words soon wears away, but sarcasm carries a poison that festers in the memory for years.

One fact which renders the use of sar-

castic wit such an unforgiveable offence is that the majority are powerless before it; they cannot answer, but they can and do resent it, feeling its unfairness The man of bitter tongue who employs it wantonly and frequently against his neighbors is as cruel and contemptible as the brute who strikes a woman or the desperado who shoots an unarmed man. He is a social menace who will receive no mercy.

Fortunately, sarcastic genius is rare. Some, like Whistler, cultivate it and rejoice in making enemies, but almost invariably it is a curse to its possessors. They have their reward, it is true. Their phrases are handed down for generations as classics of epigram and achieve for their authors an acrid immortality, but this is a poor sort of success.

There is a class of men who wish to be sarcastic, but lack the faculty that wings the barbed word like an arrow. They are merely spiteful. They have the nasty disposition and poison sac of the rattlesnake, but are fangless. The sarcastic genius in-

vents something, his wit though stinging has a malign power, but the spiteful man contributes to the sum of human activities nothing better than a smirk, a depreciating titter, a petty sneer. He does not create; he hisses. There is something magnificent about a mind that coins the phrase which will live as long as the language in which it is uttered; but the mean disposition that creates nothing, accomplishes nothing, praises nothing, and is content with impotent scoffing at the efforts and success of other men, works its own condign punishment. Some people of this type have good qualities and think they are of value to the world. It is a disposition of Providence that they fail to see themselves as others see them, the pitiful embodiment of a snarling sneer.

Once or twice in a century a man is born with the wondrous faculty of mirroring forth the words and doings of mankind in mirthful guise, of touching with the fairy wand of wit our vanities and shortcomings, of giving us sound philosophy and life-lore in lines of magic laughter, who

contrive to be sarcastic yet never unkind. Such men are benefactors of the race; Josh Billings, Artemas Ward, Eugene Field, who are gone, and the genial Mr. Dooley who is still with us. Long after they are dust men and women will be gladdened by their merry thoughts, sad hearts will be lightened and weary brains freshened by the works of these golden-hearted humorists. There is no poison on their shafts, no bitterness in their epigrams. They have made life brighter for us all. May their tribe increase, the sod rest lightly upon their heads in death and may the Lord be kind to them as they were kind to their fellowmen!

But woe betide the public man who sets up for a wit. Once he has donned the livery of Harlequin, he can never take it off. It is a shirt of Nessus. Men will applaud his witticisms and repeat his epigrams and accord him all they give the gifted clown, but their respect he can never gain, no matter what his merits. The public mind has an abiding distrust of the joker.

Such brilliancy never made a friend, but countless enemies. It blesses neither him who gives nor him who receives. It is more dreaded than poison and more hated than sin. The counsel I would give a brother who feels within him this evil genius for making others squirm and rousing the laugh of jeering applause is: throttle it as it were a cobra, for otherwise you will live to see the death of your last hope and the back of your last friend and when you are gone, men will say: "Thank God, there is one bitter tongue the less in this world."

THE OPEN MIND.

AGE and life are very relative terms. Many men are old at thirty and youth smiles from the eyes of others who have passed the seventieth milestone. The real distinction is between the open and the closed mind. The average man early becomes indifferent and case-hardened. He falls into ruts and does not take the trouble to get out of them. He takes the attitude that it is foolish to spend time on anything that is not of immediate use and has not to do with the personal money problem. He reverts to type.

Comparatively few men who succeed in a marked degree or who exhibit high qualities of resource in a crisis are groove men. Of course, success is not to be taken as a synonym of money-making, which after all is a very crude affair. Nor is resource to be interpreted as the faculty of doing an ordinary act at a critical time. Success and resource come from the open mind.

The great benefactors of mankind were enabled to accomplish much by close observation of men and things and an intelligence that accepted each new phenomenon as having a bearing on their work. Creative ability in literature comes to its own and delights readers because they who have it and utilize it let nothing escape them in the world in which they live. The smallest traits of individuals, the tricks of physiognomy, the moving effects of passion and conscience, are all filed away almost unconsciously, and every day adds to the collection and corrects it. Great writers of fiction are of necessity men whose minds are as sensitive as photographic plates.

The great inventors have all their lives been wide-awake to every small happening in inanimate nature. Those who gave us the steam-engine and the electric dynamo, communication by wire and wireless and all that long list of appliances that are today household words, solved their delicate problems and perfected their machines because they were ever alert for anything new in their chosen fields. The

journeyman toils mechanically in his place; the inventor is ceaselessly expectant. He may have done a bit of work a thousand times, yet he is on the watch for the next time when a slight deviation may unfold to him a secret.

The masters of souls, the men by whose instrumentality miracles of grace have been wrought were men to whom each one who sought them was as a book newly opened. Average spiritual advisers divide people into groups as one sorts vegetables, but the sages of the spiritual life know that each soul is a distinct entity and demands a minute inspection.

The attitude is the same, one of vigilant expectancy. The conclusion of yesterday may at any moment be modified by the developments of today. One has said that genius consists in seeing what others are looking at. Any other position is indicative of mental laziness, and means the loss of valuable material and knowledge. With certain exceptions, each character of fiction, each important discovery of mechanics and science, each great truth of the higher life, were passed unheeded by

myriads until the right men came and made them their own.

We are often bored by the insatiable curiosity of children. In a measure, it is a faculty we all had once, but killed by neglect. We go through life incessantly grouping experiences. The alert mind does indeed group them also, but always with an eye for something which cannot rightly be filed in the allotted places prepared. A certain Oriental, who sojourned long among us, was famed for his ceaseless questions. Reporters went to interview him and instead were subjected to analytic probing. Personages called to see him and met the same fate. That man has been able to do wonders for his own country by reason of the searching examination he gave to every denizen of the Western hemisphere who ever met him. He was the personification of the open mind.

A singular acquaintance, who recently called upon me, stated that the great mystery is "that which is called life." It was his opinion that three books were worth study: — White's "Selborne," Thoreau's

"Walden Pond" and Walton's "Angler." He said that these three men had given life real study. He also remarked that nothing in the world was devoid of interest and that a really wise man could write volumes on the turning of a worm. Fabre immortalized himself by studying insects.

But the boon of an open mind to the ordinary man is its bounty to himself. It exorcises melancholy, enlivens monotony and makes each new day a progress through some room of a wonderful museum. Humanity, in the mass, is a sleeping world. The wondrous pageant sweeps by unseen. But here and there are a few —too few—who remain awake, and in the intervals of our slumber they tell us what we have missed. They are the men of the open mind.

COMPROMISE.

ONE of David Graham Phillips' short stories is called "The Compromise." It dealt with two strong and clear-eyed people, a man and a woman who, after marriage started to conserve their ideals and succeed. These ideals involved principle. Both found out that adherence to the ideals would cost success and both compromised.

The world progresses by a compromise of non-essentials, but each compromise in real essentials retards that progress. In the latter case the individual for personal success enacts, to some degree, the traitor to the cause all are bound to uphold. Though the individuals may not appreciate it, each act of such a nature weakens the moral fibre of the race, just as each divorce strikes at marriage and each political deal makes honest government more difficult.

One of the basic truths the modern world is fatally learning to forget is that

rejection of compromise in essentials must continue in individuals if society is to endure. The price has nothing to do with the question. From the beginning of the world the best men and women have paid the price unflinchingly and that is one reason why the world is as good as it is today, in spite of myriad evil agencies. It is the individual citizen who saves the State by being faithful in his own place, great or small. It is the individual soldier who saves the army by doing his whole duty of whatever sort. If people could understand that each such crisis in their own lives is not merely a personal matter, but a cosmic matter, they would think long before deadening conscience with shifts and sophistries.

In the long run, moreover, the compromiser who stoops to win, loses. There can be no winning that involves loss of self-respect. The Christian who fails at the test knows himself to be unworthy of the Church. The statesman who truckles to retain office knows himself meaner than the purchased voter. The merchant who cheats because others do, knows himself

for a thief. There can be no winning for men who resort to such practices.

The man who stands to his guns where principle is involved will not go empty-handed when he is called to God. He has done what in him lay, to promote the coming of God's Kingdom, the great cause of all the centuries. On a lower plane, he lives on, as long as there is a man on earth who recognizes that stand and is heartened by it. As the consequences of one evil deed are endless, so are those of a good deed. Did Mr. Reed fail when he refused to purchase the Presidency at the price of his principles? Not at all. He will be honored in history when many Presidents are forgotten. Did Mr. Cleveland fail when he fought against all odds for good government, was called a traitor to his party and left for the nonce abandoned by all except a few? Not a bit of it. The day is coming when Cleveland will stand in history beside other great Americans, because he would not compromise essentials.

The outlook for Christianity in the Western world is not inspiring. What, hu-

manly speaking, has been the great solvent, the main agency of decay? Compromise. You can discern its destructive effects in every religious organization outside the Catholic Church. What has been the hidden power behind that Church, that has kept her steadfast to the right at all costs? The Holy Spirit, who strengthened her representatives against compromise in the essentials of faith and morals.

If there is any one lesson that the modern temporazing generation needs to learn more than another, it is this same truth: that compromise in essentials is ruinous for the individual and the organization and that the contributory agents of the ruin are individuals.

Temptation normally presents the thin end of the wedge to the tempted. He is told that it is a small matter, that he must look out for himself, that good men have yielded before.

Despite all the cries of wild-eyed reformers, who yell that every city is corrupt to the core, it is not so much the open vice, the shameless deals made almost publicly, the looting of a community by dis-

honest politicians. It is rather, as Phillips states, the hold of the machine, some sort of a hold, on men of principle and high character, seemingly absolutely independent and actually almost so. The hold exists because the men of principle, to gain something they wanted, have more or less compromised that principle, and too late find out that the thread has become a cable. The quarry of the bad politician is not bad men—he can get them cheap—but honest men, and knowing that he cannot bring them to open dishonesty, he induces them to compromise some principle for honor, trade or advantage. It is the cunning network of such strings that holds down the Gulliver of civic honesty. Again the indictment is against the individual.

Life is a system of compromises— in non-essentials; but the life of compromise in essentials is the vitality of putrefaction.

RELIABLE MEN.

THERE are too many people in this country who think that trickiness and sharp dealing are the touchstones of success. Altogether too much stress was laid some years ago on the financial feats of men whom an undeviating justice would have placed in jail, but at that time they seemed very clever and were pointed out to the youth of the land as exemplars. One would hardly think that such models were needed in a country where adulteration, substitution and jobbery had become fine arts, but as a matter of fact, tricksters were for a while, our symbols of success.

Certain events that have transpired have somewhat sobered the public on this head. The public pocket nerve suffered several sharp twinges that wonderfully stimulated the conscience, and it is now quite generally recognized that stealing directly or indirectly is an indelicate way of amassing a fortune.

This gospel of dishonesty was worse than useless even for its own sordid ends, because nine-tenths of those who heard it were unable to imitate the bad examples successfully. The sporadic cases of men who had risen to prominence by shady methods were typical of unusual ability misused. It would have required genius to duplicate their performances. They who looked on and imitated absorbed nothing except the cult of dishonesty.

It placed the idea in many slow brains that no one but the fool earned money; that sharp men arranged a shell game and acquired it easily. The entire ethical question of right and wrong was ignored as if it were an exploded theory. The logical consequences of cutting away from the moorings of business honesty were inevitable. We have all helped to pay for this pernicious preaching.

It would be a "consummation devoutly to be wished" if men, and especially young men, were to realize that, apart from any higher considerations, honesty is the best policy and that it is the reliable man who

succeeds in the long run, not the rogue.

The very men who were responsible for the debauchery of business methods illustrated the truth of the adage, for they gathered about them faithful and reliable employees, "falsely true." If this is the rule with financial buccaneers, it is ten fold true of reputable business men.

Every organization must have reliable men. They are the stone, steel and concrete of the business edifice. Many other qualities are desirable for the up-building, promotion and growth of a great enterprise; initiative, alertness, system and so on, but reliability is essential.

The great rewards of life come to those who unite in their personalities large mental grasp, ceaseless activity and dominating character, but such men are few. Those of lesser gifts must be content with lesser rewards. The one path of success to the average man is along the lines of faithful service.

Napoleon revolutionized warfare, but he had behind him soldiers who idolized their leader. He supplied the genius, his men

the faithfulness and courage. The trend of modern methods is toward consolidation. In every department of life large organizations, well-planned and superbly officered, are the order of the day. In them a man is assessed at his true valuation as a worker. If he has unusual ability, some special gift that makes him valuable to the men at the helm, he is sure of advancement—but he must be reliable.

Brilliant dilletanti we may have from time to time, whimsical geniuses who delight us in hours of ease, but we will have nothing of them in the strenuous work of life. Modern life for men of responsibility is an affair of strain. They supply the initiative, the push, the plans. What they need and must have is a supply of men upon whom they can depend; who will not steal or be faithless or careless, but attend faithfully to their several departments.

These adventurers who win every thing by an amazing coup, who outwit the old campaigners, almost invariably lose everything by an equally amazing coup. One might as well take a tight-wire artist as

a model. The work and business of the land is compacted of individuals who, utilizing in full measure the abilities with which they are endowed, do their best quietly and steadily. There is no place for adventurers, or tricksters on the firing line of modern business. Some do appear, but gravitate by elimination to the penitentiary and the madhouse.

A human organization built up for a definite purpose in trade or manufactures tends to approach the machine. The efficiency of a machine depends on the quality of the parts and their efficiency. Men hate to be called cogs in a human machine, yet after all, the organization is democratic in this, that all concerned have their part in its fitness and effectiveness. It all comes to this, little as we may like it; we are cogs in the machinery of life, or else we are on the scrap-heap. Our practical duty is to be good cogs.

THE CALL OF THE SEA.

THE warm Spring winds and the stirring of Nature after the winter's sleep awaken in the hearts of thousands of inland dwellers a longing for the sea. Though the spell that the ocean casts over mankind is as ancient as the tides, it is today as potent as when the returning Greeks from Persia raised the joyful shout, "The sea! The sea," or Balboa "silent on a peak in Darien" first surveyed the Pacific.

Had not the testimony of ages proved that the ocean exerts a magic influence on men, we might surmise that national restlessness or a search for health was the reason for the annual hegira of Americans to the coast. Both have much to do with the migration, but deeper and more far-reaching than either is an impulse as subtle, yet powerful as love or music, an indefinable, inward summons—the call of the sea.

To those who dwell along the shore, who

are familiar with every mood of that changeful element, life holds an ever-present phase of the unexpected and a novelty that rarely palls. They live on the border line of the mysterious and unfathomable, but in truth it is only they who, loving the sea, must pass their days far away from it, or they who were cradled among mountains or on prairies, enjoy to the full capacity of their being the enchanting mystery of the deep.

What swimmer can ever be content in land-locked lake or tepid river, who has breasted the Atlantic, plunged through its giant rollers and been swept in on the crest of its foam-flecked breakers? The river is dead, the lake a listless medium, but the sea is joyously, aggressively alive. A man may love the city's roar, he may experience the deep peace of the mountains, but the ocean's thunder soothes and its rock-born spray is as strong wine to the hearts of men.

Even for those whom sickness or weariness condemns to inactivity, who can only feast their eyes on the changing pageant of the waters, watch the golden moon-path

across the undulating surface or the tossing waves of the sea-horses in storm, there is nepenthe in the sea.

One recalls Mr. Blaine's eloquent and pathetic funeral oration over President Garfield, when he speaks of the dying man's longing for the sea, his hope that health would return to him near the ocean where he would be lulled to sleep by the sound of its myriad voices. It expresses so well the yearning of sick soul or stricken body for that mighty, distant music—the call of the sea.

Who can sing a new song of the ocean! The sweetest singers, the most gorgeous painters of word-pictures have done their best, and the world knows it by heart. But the influence that inspired them all is endowed with immortal youth; it sweeps the heart-strings of prosaic beings, making soundless music, thrilling mankind from age to age. Doubtless the jaded occupant of the Twentieth Century is filled with the same delightful awe as he gazes over the wide blue waters, as that which stirred the first man who stood on the

verge of a continent, rapt in that moving mystery, the sea.

It may be the same the world over, this summer exodus to the coast, but there must be a difference in the older countries, where the people are rooted in their own ground and attached to the home roof-tree. In some way they have lived longer than we and lost that curious hopefulness which is such a marked characteristic of our people. The American is nomadic; his household gods are set up on wheels. His environment incites him to change. As Spring approaches the journals and magazines put forth their leaves of alluring advertisements, and every billboard blooms into pictures of seashore delights. Nature, trade and his own rebellious heart conspire to transport him seaward, and he needs must go.

Even under modern conditions the breaking up of a household and its temporary establishment elsewhere are expensive and troublesome. Grown-up people feel this keenly. It dulls the pleasure of a summer vacation, for domestic and financial anxieties flourish under any sky.

Not so with the child. To him the packing of trunks is a joyful portent. To him expressmen are invested with mystic dignity. The rush of the train and the changing scene are a continuous entertainment. When finally the journey ends, and the ocean is spread out for his benefit, his joy is unalloyed. Never was there such a sea before, such fields of sand, such rocks and grass. His are the wide acreage of blue sky, the boundless expanse of waves. The wind is his, too. All this heritage of Nature belongs to the little boy until that sad day, when he passes out through the portals of childhood. The elders have their games and schemes in the social field, the artificial things that enliven tired people at a summer resort, but the child dwells in a delightful country of his own.

All hearts respond to the ocean's summons, but not always in equal measure. Only in those early golden days do we ever understand the secret of the sea, by simply feeling it. None but childish eyes see the strange and elusive beings who people the deep. We have seen them long ago. We have heard them, when we were

small and innocent, above the booming surges, the noisy pebbles and the wind. Loud and clear they came to our childish ears, the ring of elfin laughter and the peal of fairy trumpets—the call of the sea.

UNCONSCIOUS POETS.

DOUBTLESS the best poetry is never written. Man has a boundless capacity for feeling and only a limited faculty of expression. Poetry is not professional verse-making. Verse is the vehicle, not the motive power. The poet is one who sees a vision and strives to reproduce it in words, as the painter tries to reproduce his on canvas or the sculptor in marble. The basic thing is the vision.

The mechanical process is the great difficulty of those to whom the Muse commandingly whispers: "Sing." It is the same task that confronts the painter or sculptor who is bidden to re-create with brush or chisel the immortal children who dance adown the vales of fancy. It is mental parturition and means agony of soul. This is the chief reason why the number of accredited poets is so small.

He who would express beautiful thoughts may scorn rhyme as Whitman did or he may take the easy way of blank

verse, but he must prove his case and show his message if men are to listen, for poetry to most men means rhyme. "Vers-libre," must produce its evidence. On the other side is the danger of taking tinkling verses for poetry without regard to the thought conveyed. This is responsible for endless reams of doggerel.

It is often said now that poetry is out of fashion. Poetry is never out of fashion, for in truth every man is more or less, in his own way, a poet. Poetry is as much a part of life as air and sunshine, but the consecrated form of expression has been crowded out by other things. Men prefer to read ideas printed so as to fill columns rather than those with white spaces on both sides. Men have heard so many rhymes in popular songs, so much tuneful nonsense, that they tire of rhymes telling of the empyrean.

Gray immortalized the "mute, inglorious Milton." The poets I have in mind may be inglorious but they are by no means mute. In former times the bard stood in the market-place. You may find him there today. The only difference is

that the whole country has become one vast market-place and the bards are everywhere.

Every man is a poet when he mounts his hobby. The cobbler has his Pegasus. He may not stop to arrange his song in lines of accepted form, but when he speaks of the things nearest his heart he waxes poetical. The bridge-builder, the engineer and the commercial traveller all give rein to fancy when they touch the main work of their lives.

It was a trait of the old bards to be borne away on the wings of imagination, to leave the world of the senses for that strange and wondrous country whose memories linger in the recesses of the brain. They sang of hard battles, the stroke of spear on shield, the dust and gore of war, and anon would paint word-pictures of youths and maidens dancing in the twilight on the rich meadow, as did Homer in his description of the shield of Achilles. The bard burst forth into song because he loved these things.

You may find the bard anywhere; in sober office or swiftly moving train. He

may wear a frock coat or a week's growth of beard, but you can always be sure of one thing; if you touch the right note, that thing of life in which he is most interested, he will sing. You must reach his sub-conscious mind, let him forget himself and be wafted into the realm where his fancy dwells. Then he will tell you of battles, dreams and ambitions, the thoughts that lie in the deep places of his soul. It may be something that the world accepts as a grand and inspiring theme; it may be some common wonder like the making of things out of steel or making steel do things with the aid of steam and the lightning, but at all events he will talk poetry, he will light up his narrative with the flame of imagination, he will invoke the Muse to tell his story better. He is an unconscious poet.

Mayhap the poems we admire most are stolen property. The man of verses sat by the man of visions and listening to the words poured forth in rich disorder, gathered them up and gave them to the world as his own. Our great books are filled with folks who were kidnapped. The story

writer appropriated their personalities and mental processes and compelled them to slave forever in his books. I fear too that the poets will have a heavy account to render for the poems they have stolen from the farmer, the soldier and the sailor, the visions of other men incorporated into their smooth and silvery verses.

The professional poet does not own the universe. The glories of sun and sky and tempest, the beating of stormy seas, the laughing meadow and still, smiling forest belong to all who have the eyes to see their beauty. It is in the artistic expression that the monopoly consists. I have heard noble poems from the lips of men who never wrote a verse, men who had wrestled all their lives with elemental things. Yet they had the poet's vision, they could tell in winged words of the things they had seen. Often they have made me think of old Homer, these gnarled and wrinkled journeymen of labor.

Poetry will never die while men live; for the world of men is filled with it. The verse-maker may scoff and call it fustian, but the poet like the poor man, is always

with us. He may swing the hammer or hold the reins, he may watch the loom or the market, but if he has the proper encouragement and a sympathetic listener, if the thing dearest to his heart is mentioned, he will, like the old, blind bard, lift up his voice and sing of the things he loves.

HEROES AND VALETS.

"NO man is a hero to his valet." He who coined that phrase had no love for valets. Doubtless many people knowing themselves to be very unheroic, take a fearful joy in repeating the words, but it is with the melancholy satisfaction of the discomfited spell-binder who would pelt the statue of Webster with aged eggs. In truth, the sting of the sarcasm, like that of the bee, is in its tail. The phrase-maker conned the list of all who would be associated with a hero in one capacity or another and would appreciate him, and at the end of the list he came on the valet, as the one being most likely to vilify a great man. It is a sort of a survival of the unfittest.

The phrase-maker knew human nature too well to say that no man is a hero to his wife or mother, for these skilful artificers can manufacture heroes out of the most unpromising material. He did not insinuate that a man's chums smile know-

ingly when he is called a hero, for a man's chums are his best allies under all circumstances. Nor did he hint that a great commander is no hero to his men, for these would wade through blood to lay the laurel on his brow. No. He pointed out the one individual petty enough to belittle a great man.

It is a curious fact that sincere admiration means kinship of soul with the one admired. A man's wife or mother would gladly give her life for him. His friends would beggar themselves in his service. His men would march to the cannon's mouth to recover his body. All this goes to show that in order to appreciate a hero you must be a bit of one yourself.

Now look on the other side. What manner of human is the average valet? He is the sort who smokes his master's cigars and drinks his wine, talks him over among other valets, and who would shiver if you pointed a tooth-brush at him. By the very nature of his trade he is a colorless personality whose days are spent in caring for the clothes, boots and furnishings of another. The ordinary man would prefer

digging ditches to such work, but valeting has an attraction for a certain type: that hates hard work, that loves to strut before housemaids, the sort of creature that whispers behind his hand to one of his own ilk that his master snores like a pig and makes noises with his soup when he eats alone. If you have need of a sneak, search for a man who maligns his employer.

I have no quarrel with valets as a class. Doubtless there have been and are magnanimous persons among them. But I have in mind the valet who thinks the hero whose boots he blacks an over-rated individual. The unthinking public has a false idea about celebrated men. It would have them always on parade. It would shudder at the thought of a popular figure in pajamas and night-cap. It would have him seen through the glorified haze that surrounds Ouida's guardsmen or Richard Harding Davis' pattern-panted prigs. In short the unthinking public's idea of a notable is enbalmed in the masterpieces of Laura Jean Libbey. Now the valet class represents a section of the unthinking pub-

lic in close menial relations with a great man.

Even the conscientious and devoted valet has the limitations of his class. All men, be they monarchs or ashmen, eat, wash themselves and sleep in beds. What differentiates a leader of men from the common ruck is power of intellect and character, not the cut of his clothes. A man may be famous in both hemispheres for his learning, his bravery or artistic skill, but the menial who lays out his clothes thinks of him merely as a master who locks up his cigars or has a predilection for shocking hats. The trouble with the valet is that his view-point is wrong and petty.

There is a variety of human that revolts from what is noble. Conscious of its own meanness, its scurviness of soul, it seeks to drag down all to its own level. We have all longed to stop the vile tongues that proclaim no man as honest and no woman as pure. Unfortunately, such people are too well represented in the valet class. Then there is the result of environment.

Put ten men adrift in a boat without food and cannibalism is likely to result. Put ten men in a club, dependent on each other in business, society and politics, and they will be very careful of what they say and do. The poor valet has nothing to keep his principles and conduct up to the norm. He lives in a world of petty, soul-shrinking things. His importance among his kind depends upon the amount of gossip or scandal he can bring to the common fund.

I have read many books about great men, books that were compiled by writers with the souls of valets. They relate every small circumstance tending to show their victims as base clay, every outburst of temper, misunderstood remark, every backstairs incident and scullery episode, and they have caused me to honor and pity the great men and women thus defamed by ink-harpies. A man be a hero to his valet! The good Lord forbid it! That would be the final argument to prove the alleged hero was a sham.

SELF EXPRESSION.

THUMB prints may be collected by the million, yet among them all you will find no "duplicates." When supposed "doubles" are examined closely, they will be found to differ in important details. The fact is; each individual is unique; there is no other exactly like him. This in the domain of the physical. In the larger and more complex realm of the mental and moral these differences are much intensified.

If people realized these facts early in life and acted on them, the sum of human accomplishment would be multiplied. But powerful influences are at work to convince individuals that they belong in this or that class with many others. The schools, the tendency of modern business, the hard and fast rules and customs of life; all tend to quench the fire of originality, the beginnings of self expression.

Another pernicious influence is constant companionship. One who is seldom alone

has his individuality insidiously sapped. Thousands live without any conscious ideas of their own. They are conveyed through life on the thoughts and decisions of others. For the proper development of natural powers a certain amount of physical or at least mental seclusion is essential.

The obstacles to effective accomplishment are of course innumerable, but the main one is not laziness or dissipation or lack of opportunity, but lack of confidence and the consequent falling into the groove habit. Many early in life are conscious of a certain bent or talent, but after a half-hearted attempt or two give up and drift into some work to which accident or the need of money diverts them.

The whole world is hostile to the individual and determined to force him to conform to type. Only the strongest minds and wills are able to resist this steady pressure and forge ahead on their own lines.

In saying this, there is no intent to advocate odd or fantastic ways in the ordinary affairs of life. Conformity to sensible

fashions, accepted norms of speech and manner, is an economy for the individual, and indeed aids him in bringing out the best there is in him. The fact that certain genuises have been so original that this quality tempted them to extremes is not to the point.

We are considering what is called the average man or woman, and the argument is that such people are capable of more than they actually perform and the failure to express themselves adequately as individuals is the result of the world influences they encounter and their own lack of confidence in themselves.

If you study closely the careers, not merely of geniuses, but of ordinary people who have accomplished much for themselves and mankind, it will be found that they are remarkable for their devotion to individuality. This has nothing to do with vanity or selfishness and is merely the recognition of a fact. They were all alike in this, that they believed themselves to be distinct entities capable of great things if they were faithful to the capabilities with-

in them, and in each instance the result proves that they were right.

There is hardly an example of a man or woman who has reached distinction where at some period this conflict did not rage with the triumph of originality as the result. Thousands of parents use every influence in their power to eradicate in their children this faculty of individuality. This parental stupidity and obstinacy are most costly to mankind. It is a marked trait of those who have an inborn gift of some sort, to struggle on to utilize this gift to the fullest degree, no matter what the obstacles. Few artists or statesmen but have had to work as hard to gain an opportunity as to utilize that opportunity when it had been won.

Few Americans who have attained eminence had to struggle against such odds as Abraham Lincoln. Authorities may not agree that he was a genius, but he was in many ways something nobler and more admirable, a man who was absolutely true to himself and in every crisis of his life expressed his individuality on those around him; first his community and later on, the

nation. Webster, Clay and Calhoun have left treasures of eloquence, but not one of them or all of them, equals the Gettysburg Address. It required more than genius to write that; it required a man of exceptional moral fibre, of intense human sympathy, who all his life lived up to the maxim: Know thyself and be true to thyself.

There is in Lincoln's life and in those of scores of great Americans a lesson for every young man and woman in the land. It is not a lesson of success as such or of fame, but a lesson of self expression. There is not the smallest doubt that thousands who have lived and died in obscurity since the formation of this republic have had in them the potentiality to equal or surpass the careers of the most venerated figures in public life. The "mute, inglorious Miltons" were not always mute and inglorious because it was their fate to accomplish nothing, but because from lack of confidence or the despair that comes of thwarted effort, they settled back into the life-groove of those about them. They may have been good men and women, but they

failed in their duty to themselves. They kept their one talent in a napkin and buried it in the earth. They failed to develop the gift that was within them. Opportunity knocked at their doors time and again and they heeded it not. Analyzed carefully their failure was not intellectual, but moral. They had their chances but they lacked the courage and perseverance to accept and justify them.

There are hundreds within our own circles of acquaintance who possess the capacity to outdo those who are rated as great successes, famous people—but they lack moral power. It is useless to do anything for them; no one can do what should be done except themselves. Robert Burns might be in this class had not inborn song saved him.

It is the high duty of every man and woman to recognize that they are individuals with certain gifts whose rich and fruitful development they owe to God and mankind. They may prate of circumstances, the overmastering influences of environment, the tyranny of daily work. These are not the difficulties, the real trou-

ble is with themselves and in themselves—lack of courage for self-expression. As Emerson somewhere remarks, no one knows what he can do until he tries—and I add—and keeps on trying until he has done it.

MECHANICAL MILLENIUM.

THE wonderful progress of the world during the last half century in the means of travel, communication and manifold conveniences is undeniable. Doubtless the denizen of the early Nineteenth Century transported to our time and ordinary life would think he had awakened to the domination of magic or witchcraft. The inhabitants of the globe are knit together by the cable and the wireless; it is easy to hear the human voice and hold a conversation when the speakers are thousands of miles apart. It is a commonplace to travel in a few hours today a distance that years ago would have consumed many days. The automobile has revolutionized travel by turnpike, and the housewife of the present day can work culinary marvels by the aid of electricity.

Americans are proud of their conquests in the realm of mechanics. The man who shows you his town or the friend who

takes you through his new house always dilates on the "modern appliances" with which both are provided. Large numbers of our citizens are professionally, or financially interested in the perfection of practical mechanics, and it is to their credit that they are deeply interested in them. The number of articles on such topics published continuously in our popular weeklies and monthlies shows that this interest is really a national affair.

It is not at all surprising, that a man like Mr. Tuttle, who had for years been the head of a great railroad system and had watched the development of traveling facilities for more than fifty years, should speak with warmth and a certain undercurrent of envy of those who are beginning life with so many of the mechanical helps denied a former generation. The personal equation in such cases is simply overpowering.

In times of stress and anxiety; as when friends are on the wide sea at the mercy of storm and iceburg, or locked in inaccessible mountains, or isolated otherwise, we thank the Lord for the wireless, the

telephone and the motor-car, and we do well, for there is nothing more heart-rending than to be separated from family and friends, unable to know whether they are alive or dead, and a prey to inconsolable anxiety.

These, however, are extreme instances. If, however, we study the current of modern life and the humanity carried along by it, it is easy to discern that we have paid something for the services of the three genii: steam, steel and electricity. We have become their dependents to such a degree that we feel powerless without them.

Few people in the total of our population really understand mechanics; they accept them without proof, as they do the Munchausen stories about popularized "science." Most of them declare that science has eliminated religion. I speak here of a class unfortunately large, that has never given any real attention to religion and has derived whatever information it has—whether true or false—from the daily paper. Science, theoretical and

applied, has done this part of the community incalculable harm.

In other realms of modern life mechanics has extracted its pound of flesh. In what may be called the higher life of the intellect, in the faculties for the perception of art in its varied forms, applied science has dulled and killed these powers of the mind.

The fallacy about mechanics is that many fancy that physical comfort and convenience are the apotheosis of civilization. As in Mark Twain's story: "A Yankee in King Arthur's Court," a New Englander of rather a vulgar sort triumphs over the leaders of that far-off age by means of his gun and a slight knowledge of mechanics. A popular writer of the day has made the same mistake in the story called: "The Jingo," in which an American of the period turns an isolated mediaeval kingdom topsy-turvy by means of the commonplaces of present-day American life. The wide popularity of tales of this type and the artless air of superiority affected by people who are not producers but beneficiaries of mechanics show that a new

idolatry has taken possession of the populace—or at least a section of it—the idolatry of machinery.

This, however, is the case generally with people who are not familiar with science, rightly so-called, either in theory or practice, and who have been misled by specious articles and books written for the undiscerning. As in every other relation of life, surfeit produces a re-action. The modern family of wealth, while it is to an extent dependent on mechanical conveniences, seeks to flee them and emancipate itself Every summer the quiet places in the mountains and near the sea are occupied by an increasing number of those who are sick of cities, who wish to be spared the ring of the telephone bell, the clang of the trolley car, and even that boast of our day—electric light. This is a healthy sign.

It should be remembered that the masterpieces of human genius were produced in an age and by men and women who knew nothing about modern mechanical conveniences. The greatest works of art in sculpture, painting and poetry owe little or nothing to this genie: "science", and we

are all the poorer when we forget this. Mechanical conveniences are all right in their place, but that place is a subordinate one. The trouble with many of our fellow citizens is that they reverse the roles of Aladdin and the Genie: they are the slaves of the lamp.

When one hears the silly vaporings about "modern science," the "passing of Christianity" as a life force, the "ignorance" of the people of past centuries; when we see people accepting with flattered complacency, their kinship with the ape, as told them by some pseudo-scientist, and then look back at what humanity has done, in days innocent of steam, steel and electricity, for the salvation of souls and the highest interests of human life, we instinctively ask the question: "these thy gods, Oh Israel?"

MURDER AND MONEY.

NO ONE who reads a daily paper can help remarking the frequency of murder in this country—wholesale and retail murder. Hundreds of lives are snuffed out in a mine, not by reason of an unforseen accident, but through neglect to take precautions as well known in mining circles as the safety lamp. Scores are killed or injured in a railroad accident because overworked dispatchers make mistakes or risky engineers take chances in switching on to the main line within a minute or two of the the coming of an express, or in any of the multitudinous ways in which passengers arrive in eternity instead of their expected destination. Then there are holocausts that are the outcome of fire laws neglected or evaded, and the destruction of life wrought by those miscreants who use dynamite as their agent of death. The list is agonizingly long. It seems to be all but impossible to place the responsibility

of these deaths where it belongs, but in one way or another, the reason why the criminals are not punished is money.

More than one hundred men died in a mine not long ago because it had not been properly sprinkled. Some one ordered the cessation of that work, some one who knew what would happen sooner or later in that mine. And the end of that killing is not yet, for many of the widows and children of the dead miners will die as a consequence of that wilful neglect.

If the authorities of a railroad deliberately overwork dispatchers or trainmen there can be but one inevitable result, and they know it. If the average traveler knew to what an extent his life depended on a tired youth at a telegraph key he would think long before boarding a train. If he knew the engineer on whose keenness and decision depended the lives of those in the coaches, he would make inquiry how long it had been since the engineer had a night's sleep.

The railroad officials know these things accurately and keep up the practice. Why? Because those officials also know it is al-

most impossible to convict them of the consequences of their orders, but the ultimate reason for their action is money in the shape of economy or dividends.

Over a hundred girls were burned to death in a clothing factory a few years ago. The camera men spared us none of the horrors, and what they failed to do the headlines finished. The fire escapes of that building could not be reached. Evidence was printed to the effect that the doors leading to them were locked. Yet, after weeks of law proceedings, the conclusion was that no one was guilty. There are laws covering the inspection of fire escapes. If these were not inspected, some one was paid to overlook it. One would like to know exactly what fees the attorneys in that case received after the verdict was rendered, just how much, in terms of dollars, the whole thing saved the proprietors of the establishment.

Retail murder fares nearly as well in the courts. If there is enough money to hire skilled attorneys, handwriting experts and alienists, the most brutal and notorious murderer has a far better

chance of dying of old age than a decent citizen. When the accused is poor and the evidence sufficiently conclusive, criminal procedure works with commendable dispatch, but when money takes its stand at the rail with the attorneys for the defence, the chances of conviction are slim.

There is another sinister fact about this clogging the wheels of justice: we all help pay for it. Every time a celebrated murder case drags its weary length through months and even years, the county in which the accused is tried pays out thousands and sometimes hundreds of thousands of dollars. The citizens of that county and state pay those expenses. So, not only is money used to defeat the ends of justice through technicalities, evasions and the tricks of experts, but the taxpayer contributes a part of his income to the same end.

The citizen pays enough to obtain adequate justice in the community. One of the magazine writers gives an exposition of the cost of judges. He states that there are about three thousand judges in this country receiving on an average some

thousands of dollars a year each, and it is his contention that many of them are paid to retard, not facilitate justice. However this is but a drop in the bucket. There are the phalanx of criminal officers, costly court houses, large legal expenses, and for all these the citizen pays, with the result that corporations come forth scot-free from the worst carnival of death and the wealthy man escapes the consequences of his acts.

The country is exercised just now over the high cost of living, the tariff, unlawful combinations in trade and dozens of these bugbears of civilization (to call it by the conventional name), but there is another problem worthy of examination and solution, the high cost of injustice in capital cases. They tell us that our law comes from England. Evidently since importation it has been adulterated with money.

THE MODERN CITY.

THE average American is never satisfied with anything for long, and old things are his bugbear. The entire stage-setting of modern life is constantly being shifted in accordance with the capricious taste for novelty. The man who leaves his home city and lives for a decade abroad will have need of a guide on his return. Conspicuous landmarks are gone, small houses with encompassing lawns are replaced by ambitious blocks; historic mansions obscured by a growth of shoddy tenements, once familiar streets glare at him with the studied aloofness of the conscious parvenue.

In a subtle manner the buildings speak of the changed conditions of the people. In some metropolitan centers this phenomenon may be observed in its extremes. In such cities one who is away from home a month may come back to find his neighborhood transformed; it affects the whole

country and nearly every community is bitten by it.

I have often passed a fine old house that for a century and a quarter has stood firmly on its granite foundations with the dignity and independence of an aged citizen honored by all. It was not a handsome edifice, but it had self-respect. I notice that the owners have fallen victims to the vice of modernity and are "restoring" the centenarian out of all recognition. The old timbers seem to cry out: "This is a shame!" But the occupants wish to be in fashion, and so my old friend is at the mercy of the wood surgeons.

It grates somewhat, this craze for renovation, upon one who is so sentimental as to love old things for their own sake; who takes pleasure in queer fan-lights over front doors and chimneys of generous proportions and window-panes pink wrought in the alembic of sunshine. Not that these tricks of architecture are much in themselves. It is rather that these substantial dwellings are historical records in brick and wood. They tell the story as plainly as the printed book. The people of earlier

days were content with scant comfort from our point of view, yet the annals of those days seem to show that they gleaned as much from life as we do. Had they felt the need of more conveniences, doubtless a way to them would have been found. The houses show that the occupants found them satisfactory.

In bustling cities these architectural veterans have short shrift. They are hacked to pieces with undemonstrative rapidity, and monstrosities in steel and stone desecrate their memory. In smaller towns there is a difference. The general characteristics of the house are retained, but the modern owners imprint a new character on the old structure after the manner of the palimpsest. The family nautilus, finding the shell too restricted, makes additions to suit new conditions. The same thing took place on a gigantic scale in the building of the mediaeval cathedrals and many of the more ancient houses of England and the Continent. Each century wrote itself down truly in stone, defects and bad taste as well as excellences.

Anyone surveying well the old-fashioned homes of New England will arrive at an accurate estimate of the people who built them: sturdy narrowness, scorn of mere comfort for its own sake, a certain indefinable dignity and scrupulous neatness. How subtilly too the present generation gives itself away! It keeps the good externals of old time, but within luxury has its way. The record is overwritten there on the rigid asceticism of the past. The house reveals the owner.

In another way, dwelling places tell the story of the people. Gregariousness is a dominant note in modern life. People cannot entertain themselves; they have no interior strength, no reserves to support them in solitude. The real estate tempter comes to the suburban resident, points out the impossibility of his old-fashioned house, paints the delights of a flat; steam heat, electricity, etc. The theatres and shops will be so much nearer; there is always something going on. The suburbanite yields. Forgotten are the charms of independent life and a house of his own, air, sunlight and green grass. He moves

into the city to inhabit a caravansary, sandwiched between layers of alien humanity. The householder is no more; he is a human document properly filed and indexed. He is known by a number and summoned by a push-button. The flat tells his story too.

What a fearful jumble is the modern city! Its sky line recalls a bad dream. Every form of architectural ugliness is there materialized. The buildings along a street are like the recruits in an awkward squad; they toe the line and that is all. No troup of revolutionaries, garbed in odds and ends of military apparel is more ludicrous to the discerning eye than a typical street of an American city. In high relief are revealed the ignorance, the vagaries, the foolish ambition of architect, builder and proprietor. Greek art portrayed the spirit of Greece. Roman art, imitative yet independently adaptive, mirrored the Roman character. In both there was a faithfulness to the laws of symmetry. But our modern cities are a hideous hodge-podge, without law, design

or taste. Like Topsy, they have "jes' growed."

It is a true portrait. It shows forth our slip-shod educational methods, our benighted contempt for the canons of the past, our corroding materialism, our unaccountable pride in costly ugliness. The human nautilus has gone to great trouble to make his shell an authentic record of all his deficiencies.

IGNORANCE AND EDUCATION.

THIS is an age of shams. We eat sham food sold to us in ornamental cartons. We wear sham clothes that fall to pieces in a few months. The sick load their systems with sham medicines. We shout ourselves hoarse over sham statesmen and go into raptures over sham culture. Among many curious notions prevalent at the present day is that concerning the dividing line between ignorance and education. Broadly speaking, the criterion is the ability to read and write the vernacular. If you can spell through the newspapers and sign your name you are educated; if you cannot you are a clod.

I never pass our numerous and costly schoolhouses without wondering whether they are worth what they cost the community. Every one has heard of Lord Macauley's prodigious schoolboy who was credited by the essayist with an amount of knowledge that would have been un-

usual in a university professor. Are not these edifices erected with the vague expectation of producing prodigies? I cannot rid myself of the dread that these great schoolhouses are temples of idolatry —the idolatry of false educational standards. The pagans built costly structures in honor of gods who were mere personifications of the elements or the passions. The moderns build costly structures in honor of a deity they call education.

Have you ever met a boy or girl in the grammar grades who could read intelligently or could write a fair letter? I have listened to many youngsters recite and read; they might as well have been mouthing Choctaw. Lucid composition seems to have become a Lost Art in the schools. Not long ago I received a letter from a young collegian. If all goes well, he will graduate next year with the degree: Bachelor of Arts. His letter would be no credit to a child of ten, educated at home by a careful mother.

We have lost our bearings in this matter of education, mistaken the sham for the reality. Some of the wisest men and

women I have ever known were unable to read or write. I suppose school children of the present day would look down on them in pity. I recall meeting a hulking boy of fourteen who was looking for a job. He had spent two years at a grammar school. Obesrving his broad shoulders, I hinted that laborers were needed in various places. "Awh," remarked he, "That's all right for the old man; he can't read. I got an education."

We all have our narrow lines of learning, but outside of these we are ignorant. Higher mathematics, mechanics, electrical matters, medicine, the different departments of business are an unknown country to all except those who have specialized in them. How many master a foreign language in school or college? Yet porters in European hotels and Oriental dragomans speak half a dozen languages with fluency and surprising correctness. If you wish to measure your own ignorance, talk with a farmer, a telephone repairer, a motorman, or the first man you encounter who has a special trade.

In the generation that has passed were

hundreds of men who could neither read nor write, yet carried on large enterprises successfully and figured more closely than the technical experts. They reached the solution of problems by methods of their own, but the solutions were correct. The architects of great American fortunes owed little to the schools. On the principle that men admire what they lack, many of these have given millions to the schools, but as a matter of fact, they won an education that no schools can give, and in their chosen lines they were experts.

I have no intention of decrying education, but at the same time, I do not like to see schools erected into a fetish. This seems to be the tendency. It is taken for granted that if a boy or girl spends so many years at school he or she comes out educated. Yet if you happen to be thrown in with these young people you will be at a loss to find out what they have learned. They have swallowed a few facts, they have acquired a jargon, they are entirely convinced that they are educated, but when they try to find situations there seems to be something lacking.

What amazes me is the solid training, the mass of accurate knowledge possessed by men and women who are not regarded as educated at all in the popular sense of the word. Young people who have enjoyed all the advantages the schools can give are accorded a definite position or class status, while those who have had to fend for themselves, never dreaming that they possess any educational standing, put them to shame when there is question of accuracy and efficiency.

Do not make prigs of children by exhibiting them and their supposed talents. In ninety-nine cases out of a hundred, a phonograph will do better work and is more enjoyable. Let them see and know people who are not considered educated. Let them find out how little mere book learning is worth when placed side by side with experience and close observation. The more I see of workmen, of those who earn money by producing real results, the more I feel schools to be over-rated institutions and myself an ignoramus.

ACROBATS.

THE daily press is fast becoming a series of chronicles devoted to the performances of lightning-change artists, to puffs of surprising intellectual side-shows and the mental pirouettes of smirking dancers. I feel that an apology is due the hard-working members of the theatrical profession for using this figure of speech to describe the vocal and printed antics of the so-called "leaders of thought." The stars of the stage and sawdust ring labor strenuously and endanger their lives for small salaries. The theatre and circus demand the spangles, the rouge and the set smile. They are a part of the business. But for our sins and exactions we are afflicted with hordes of publicity-seekers who are ready to advocate, approve or argue anything from kleptomania to homicide for half a column of print. They are literary mercenaries.

The Monday morning paper is of necessity dull, but one wonders what dearth of

news impels editors to give space to the pages of slush and blasphemy miscalled, "sermons." The worst characteristic of these diatribes is not their outrage against religion and decency, though this is flagrant enough, but their self-evident insincerity. Any craze or ism is snatched up by these talkers with shark-like voracity. Nothing is too base or revolting, provided the speakers can catch the ears of the groundlings.

The Eighteenth Century saw the rise of a new species of scribe, whose pen was at the service of anyone who would pay, and who dealt out abuse without stint at the will of his employers. But it must be said, in explanation if not exculpation, that most of these scurrilous writers wrote that they might eat. Their modern representatives have not even this small excuse; they write merely to be talked about.

There is no crime so noisesome that they disdain to touch it; no disaster on which they refrain from hanging their anathemas. A recent disgusting murder trial furnished them with material for months. They could not even let the dead

of the "Titanic" rest under the waves of the North Atlantic. That awful scene which the moving-picture shows were forbidden to exploit was sketched with all the horrors the pulpiteers could conjure up, to denounce someone or other. All for notoriety!

Time was when journals had convictions. Advertising and money have eliminated these. We smiled at Charles A. Dana and his animosities. But they were honest animosities. He wrote what he thought, without fear or favor. But the modern editorial is as much a matter of commerce as a patent medicine advertisement. It is a wonder newspaper offices dare to preserve their files, so redolent are they of rank inconsistency. But the proprietors know their public. Yesterday and tomorrow count for nothing. To tickle the public palate for today is enough.

The most melancholy of all literature is history—at least as it has been written in English these three centuries past—for the most popular histories reveal a degree of moral turpitude almost incalculable in the garbling of texts, the destruction of con-

texts and twisting of plain statements. The men who wrote Church history, did so with their sources before them, and they deliberately mutilated what they found there to make out a case for prejudice.

No wonder a roar of rage swept across England when Britons read what Lloyd George said of the Anglican Establishment. That rage was the natural explosion of a nation that had been systematically lied to for three hundred years. Lloyd George is probably the most bitterly hated man in English public life by the adherents of Anglicanism because he tore off the plaster that covered a sore in the body politic of Great Britain.

Does any honest man, irrespective of creed, believe for a moment the lies that are peddled by shameless sectaries about the Catholic Church? Not one. Do these defamers themselves believe the filth they are circulating? Not for an instant. It is merely their trade. There is a degenerate section of readers that craves this pabulum. It has had its prototypes in every century.

When religious prejudice was a creed,

when party spirit was hot, it was only natural that men were carried away by hate and obstinate dislike, and believed anything against an enemy. Today both are anachronisms. Yet for a paltry wage certain writers pander to the appetites of the ignorant and unthinking.

The posing and grimacing go on from day to day. Men write magazine articles and books for one side or the other, precisely as a contractor builds a house without care about the use to which it will be put when finished. When a new paymaster appears they will write other articles and books that flatly contradict what they had written before. All this without regard to the truth defamed, the characters smirched or the evil done.

The only line to take concerning all this trash is to pass it over in disgust. But honest people everywhere ought to be on their guard against hired and conscienceless scribblers. No matter how many degrees they write after their names, or the wide advertising a sensational press gives them, or the blatant effrontery of their very pose, they are mercenaries and their

word is worth no more than the promises printed on a cure-all, or the ante-election charges of a demagogue.

OBLIGATIONS.

BETWEEN the two words promise and performance lies in great part the field of human action. Whether in an individual, corporate or national way, men work on the principle that action is the fulfilment of a promise.

The simplest transaction of life between man and man is an instance of this; the ordering of groceries, the writing of a check, the hiring of a house. There is a mutual promise with expectation of mutual performance.

All the great works of public utility and corporation enterprise, the railroads, industrial plants and other achievements performed by men banded together in a business way illustrate in all the ramifications of their construction the working out of the self-same basic idea.

Not only is there a contract in each case between the leading parties, but on each side there is a chain of contracts between the leaders and those selected to perform

allotted duties for the completion of the work. One can scarcely realize at first the bewildering series of agreements, written, verbal or implied, which enables a company to construct a railroad or a sky-scraper. Once this work is done and the construction enters upon the function for which it was made, the working of the same principle goes on. The most humble individual who buys a railroad ticket enters upon a contract with the company and the ticket is his proof of it. In return for so much money the company agrees to transport him so many miles and guarantees him a certain measure of safety during the time of the journey. So the whole industrial world; the trains rattling over tracks, the looms whirring in the mills, the multitutes of workers hurrying hither and thither in the early morning with ceaseless clicking of heels, are all playing variations of the same theme; promise and performance.

Political affairs also conform to this principle. The candidate for office, be it great or small, first makes promises to his party. Once selected he makes promise to

the electorate and in case he is chosen the fulfilment of these and other implied promises is before him.

The great difficulty about the keeping of political promises, apart from the weakness of human nature, lies in the fact that one man makes promises to constituents numbered by thousands, all more or less differently minded and each with his own axe to grind. But all the same there is a line of consistency and performance which the elected man is pledged to observe. He may make enemies here and there, but his general duty is plain.

The balance of power between magnates of the world, the eternal shifting and changing of political and trade relations, the constant disputes in all sorts of matters are regulated by a series of promises between the different countries and which they are held to keep, or run the risk of war, or reprisal.

Thus it is that the entire fabric of modern life is knit together by mutual contracts, which however vague and indefinable, have their stern reality and constitute real obligations. This stupendous

mass of agreements is the result of national growth and modern progress in material things. In primitive times trade was barter. The man with more of one kind of goods than he needed exchanged a part of these for other goods of which he stood in need. In the course of time money of some kind came to represent value, but as business increased and the transfer of precious metals was inconvenient and unsafe, the practice came into vogue of employing written or printed promises guaranteeing the deposit of money with someone trusted by both parties. But as affairs increased and became more complex, it became necessary to employ in the transaction of business a great variety of signed and stamped papers, which by common consent came to stand for real values. Hence it is that the most important and far-reaching matters of modern trade are facilitated without the passing of money at all, but rather by the execution of certain promises which both parties by law and for their own interests are obliged to fulfil.

In the broader and higher sense life itself is the performance of a promise. We

are ushered into this world to fulfil certain duties which are clear and well defined, and good life whether in low or high station is simply the performance of these duties. Some of these contracts are inherited and we grow gradually into the realization of them and the necessity of keeping them. No one can say, on coming to a knowledge of what health is, that he is not bound to preserve that health under ordinary circumstances by certain action and abstention. No one coming to a realization of what his Faith is can escape the logic by which certain duties follow from the acceptance of that Faith. But the existence of these laws and duties, far from discouraging and bewildering people should rather strengthen them and energize duty and action, for these laws show order, without which nothing can be done well. Were we to be transported from this world of law and order to some realm where all things happened by chance and everything was unreliable, we would soon realize the value of the present system of life, however imperfectly it may work out in individual cases.

THE BETTERERS.

THERE is a vast number of people at present busy in a frantic way trying to better human conditions. They are divided into almost as many sects as Protestants. The majority of them are men and women who are well off financially and with more time on their hands than they know how to use. To give them due credit, their intentions are admirable, their activity incessant and their energy boundless. The main trouble with them is that their axioms are only assumptions, but they hold to these with all the fanatical zeal of a Mohammedan, and on these assumptions they base their work.

To take a classic instance; the Prohibitionists. Their basic doctrine is that alcohol taken internally is a poison and therefore liquor drinking must cease. It makes no difference to them that experts cannot agree upon the effect of alcohol on the human system. The Prohi-

bitionists have made up their minds and that settles the matter.

Then there are the Christian Scientists who calmly aver that there is no such thing as pain and will argue the matter out with a man who is screaming with gout

Recently we have had a new accession to the ranks, the Emmanuel movement, whose reason for existence is that ministers know more about disease and its treatment than physicians.

Lastly, we have the horde of social amateurs who discovered yesterday evils existent and well-known almost from the foundation of the world and each one of these enthusiasts is filling the air or the magazines with brand new remedies for all social ills.

There is one beautiful feature about these betterers; their enthusiasm, their unaffected and unbounded self-confidence. It demands a very high order of self-hypnotism for one who knows nothing about bridge-building to walk into the office of an engineer and tell him that his plans are all wrong. The explanation of this phenomenon is that all this betterment craze

is founded not on knowledge but on feeling, and born of sympathy rather than study and experience.

The Prohibitionist feels so intensely the evil of drunkenness that he attempts the impossible—to prevent all men from drinking liquor. The Christian Scientist pities suffering so much that he attempts an absurdity—to prove to the sufferer that there is no pain. The Emmanuel people are so eager to assuage the woes of mankind that they start to treat them without waiting to study medicine. As for the social enthusiasts, they know full well that the millenium is inside their own skulls and their only dread is that death may come before they can tell mankind all about it.

All these people think they have short cuts to the solution of world problems. They have no patience whatever with the knowledge and experience that men have painfully gathered during some thousands of years of living and dying. And most of them, to tell the truth, take man to be little more than an animal highly improved by long physical evolution. Finding that

the question of the soul bothers them they ignore or deny its existence. This, of course, simplifies their work very much.

In their one-sidedness, their illogic and pride these betterers are legitimate children of the Protestant revolt. They choose some form of misery, some undeniable ill and think its eradication means everything, just as certain Protestants specialized on predestination and others on salvation through faith alone. They do not realize that pathology, whether spiritual, physical or moral, is a hard and involved problem. They are firmly convinced that if men could be brought to see things their way the millenium would dawn.

They are also like Protestants in this, that they think that all men who lived before their time were either numbskulls or rogues and that the only ones in past centuries who are worth talking about are those who quarrelled with constituted authority. The teaching, the experience and work of mankind before Luther rebelled are simply worthless. In fact the main claim to importance that past ages can make is that the men and women of by-

gone centuries by generation made it possible for the betterers to be born. The Christian virtue of Temperance is a foolish delusion. The soothing power of the Sacraments is silly superstition. The benediction of a priest is quackery. The work of Religious Orders among the poor was unscientific. Prohibition, Christian Science, Emmanuel treatment and social dabbling are the key to everything!

The average man as he gets older wonders more and more how humanity, handicapped as it has been, has accomplished so much; he is scared by the immensity of the universe and the sum of human endeavor. He is content to do what he is told by the wisdom of ages and constituted authority, but the betterer is bothered by none of these thoughts. He knows that the Creation was a badly done job, that the only remarkable thing about mankind is its remarkable stupidity, and even his only fear has passed, for it was this; what would have become of the world if the betterer had failed to be born to solve its problems out of his own head and to teach men how to live.

TAKING PAINS.

GENIUS has been defined as "an infinite capacity for taking pains." But painstaking is not genius any more than parturition is a child. It is not genius but life that consists in the infinite capacity for taking pains.

To endure pain is passive and not necessarily heroic, but to take pains is active and oftentimes demands a courage and persistence that amount to heroism. It shows vividly the course of one who voluntarily undergoes discomfort and perhaps anguish in order to effect some result which he considers worth the trouble. All real effort entails pain. The line of carelessness, of least resistance generally ends in pain, but the end is unsought and terrifying. He who takes pains, surveys the problem, counts the cost and calmly goes forward to the long and toilsome conflict, believing that he does no more than his duty.

It is hardly realized to what extent our

civilization depends upon this quality in men who gain small honor and little pay. If the workers ceased to take pains we would all speedily be in a parlous state, for it is just this extra effort, this painful care, this ceaseless vigilance that keep the wheels of the world revolving and spell progress.

The magnate in his private car, the capitalist in his sumptuous skyscraper office and the commutor who clings to a strap while steam or electricity hurl him miles across the country, all depend for life and limb upon the painstaking of men they have probably never seen and are not interested in at all.

We are living an artificial life. The city dweller inhabits a world not so much of God as of man. He does his work not standing on the solid earth, but perched like a bird hundreds of feet in the air in a steel and stone cage. He goes about, not by means of the feet given to him by the Creator but by means of remarkable contrivances invented for the purpose of transporting men and merchandise swiftly. He has gotten away from Nature and

lives in an environment of man-made things. Hence he must depend for his life and safety, not as formerly upon his own prudence and courage, but upon the care and skill of other men, strangers working for pay. If the average man sat down and considered the degree in which his continued existence is dependent upon the watchfulness of others not directly concerned with him at all, he would experience a species of nightmare.

Life at best is an individual testing of a theory of probabilities, but as most of us live, it is the wildest kind of a wager. Roughly it is regulated by a scale computed like the average expectation of life of the insurance companies, but the individual is apt to forget how small he bulks in such a scale.

There are frequent fires day and night in cities, yet we work in ten-story offices and sleep in fifteen-story hotels without a qualm. Daily the journals chronicle disasters on land and sea with deplorable loss of life, yet we buy railroad and steamship tickets and board electric cars with the unconscious aplomb of a man who is on his

way to be hanged and thinks he is going to supper. Every day we eat food of whose production and preparation we know hardly anything. It may be filled with death-dealing substances, yet we permit none of these considerations to interfere with our digestion.

What, then, is the explanation of this curious confidence, this continual taking of risks of every kind without a thought of the possible consequences? A belief that other people are taking pains. We hold without adequate proof that the manufacturer and the merchant saw to it that our food is fit to eat. If they did not we would be a poor insurance risk, for food easily becomes poison if carelessly prepared.

We board the car in the morning sure of the motorman; we take the elevator in serene confidence that it is well built and in good order and the operator reliable; we labor secure in the belief that the janitor in the basement sees to it that no anarchist enters to blow the whole structure skyward. We visit a hotel in another city and take a twelfth floor room, acting

upon the assumption that others watch while we sleep in our aerial berths, that the firemen are waiting for the first alarm, that fire-escapes are in good order and that we may go to bed in peace.

When we board the train next morning we do so on a wager with ourselves that track-walkers have inspected every foot of the miles of rail and every bridge, that the car wheels are tested, the engineer sober and in his right mind and the dispatchers sure to give proper directions. If we did not firmly believe these things I do not see how any sane man would dare to board a train.

The city goes about its business and pleasure, traffic whirls and beneath the surface of things are thousands of keen-eyed, steady-nerved men who see to it that all is safe. These are the men on whom the country depends for life, who are expected to take pains ceaselessly for a small wage. I always feel like removing my hat in presence of engineers, firemen, builders and even elevator men, for who knows when one of these will hold my life in the hollow of his hand. It is well for us that

workingmen take pains. When, therefore, they ask higher wages or shorter hours, let us reflect that we are interested, for on their courage and conscientious work depend not merely the prosperity but the safety of us all.

UNWORKED MINES.

FROM time to time the world is startled by the news that a rich deposit of gold or silver has been discovered. It may be in the Californian hills, or on the Yukon beach, or in some lonely mountain of Mexico. No matter how inaccessible and inhospitable the country or dangerous the journey, thousands are fired with the fever of the quest and flock to the new mines. The gold has reposed there for centuries. It was as valuable five centuries ago as it is today, but no man knew of its existence.

There have been millions of dollars of value almost in plain sight of travellers for unnumbered years. Fields that were despised because they did not yield wheat or vegetables to their incurious owners have yielded fortunes to men of experience. The tendency of men is to go in a rut, to esteem what others have approved. Babies played jackstraw with stones worth the ransom of an emperor. The value was

there, but it was not perceived until the fortunate comer investigated.

The richest mines have been discovered by accident. It was not scientific search or keen foresight that brought them to light, but oftentimes a stumble. It is pitiful to think that thousands in sore need, thousands whom a fraction of the wealth beneath their feet would have made prosperous for a lifetime, have gone on unheeding over undiscovered mines; to think of the melancholy fate of lone prospectors and hardy pioneers who have starved on the ground which held riches that might have brought them plenty. They worked and travelled and looked in vain, while fortune laughed at them.

Daily men are coming to the front, exhibiting qualities of leadership and skill given to few. Every great war finds its wonderful strategists who in peace would have remained plain, unhonored citizens. Every crisis brings out heroes who knew not their own heroism. No one minded these men until the chance occasion showed them for what they were.

The Elegy in a Country Churchyard is

the saddest of poems for it sings of rare abilities esteemed as nothing, but every country churchyard holds the same sad story. There rest the bones of men and women whose characters and minds would have bequeathed rich legacies of thought to mankind had fortune been kinder. They lived and died unheeding and unheeded precisely as the gold lurking in the mountain crevices and the diamonds thrown into the corner of a hut.

Men imitate one another. They troop along a path like sheep. They will make a Saul their leader because he is taller than his brethren. David has ever to prove his worth against Goliath. Many a boy who in mature years has glorified his age, fought hard to be a ploughboy and strove against his destiny. The people of remote villages from which geniuses have come laughed at those geniuses for decades and ranked them with the village fool. It was the man who could do a good day's work with the shovel who appealed to them. Years pass, fame comes to the village boy, thousands are enthralled by his eloquence, by the witchery of his style,

by his skill with brush or chisel, and after his death someone erects a hideous monument to him in his native town. As well might men have built monuments in the Black Hills or erected cairns on the sands of the Yukon. The talent was taken away from the place where it was not esteemed to bless humankind.

Nature does not tire. She has not shown all her treasures. The mountains still teem with gold, there are millions lying around us to be discovered in the future by sons of fortune. Talent is about us on every side. Men whose names will be trumpeted down the corridors of time pass us every week. We know their names and think we are perfectly familiar with them. Time will give us the lie some day.

If then the earth is filled with unworked mines; if our neighbors have hidden powers that later on will win fame, why may we not suspect ourselves? Are we not strangers to our own gifts even as we are to those of people around us? Mayhap we need to know ourselves, to see if we are not wasting our time and neglecting capabilities of moment. Time and again men

have gone on for years in some humdrum occupation until chance revealed what their life work was to be. Emerson, who wrote much nonsense and some sentences of rare beauty, said that no man knows what he can do until he has tried. Few fail to possess certain distinct gifts which they value little and seldom use. It would certainly be a grim joke for us if we carried to the grave powers that can accomplish great things and wasted our time in pottering over inanities. It would be like the prospector who starves to death on a ledge of solid gold.

The genius is an eccentricity; it is the persistent dullard who wins. The mountebank, the smooth talker, the seller of nostrums grow rich and famous, while merit starves unnoticed. It would be bad enough if it were conscious but neglected merit, but it is worse, for it is unconscious. "What fools we mortals be!" In your character, in your crevice of the world, a neglected mine may exist. Make a mental inventory. You may have overlooked the most valuable thing.

ATROCIOUS ENGLISH.

IN THE small hamlets of the land, as well as in the great cities, large sums of money and an almost incredible amount of care and thought are being devoted to the free education of the young. Journey where you will, academies and advanced schools meet the eye. They are maintained through the generosity of individuals and the large fees paid by parents to give children a mental training beyond the ordinary. Hundreds of colleges and universities are extending their domains and manifesting all the signs of an enlightened competition in education. While I have no statistics to back up my statement, I am entirely certain that the cause of education costs the people of this country, directly or indirectly, more than the railroads or other great industrial enterprises. At all events, the American people have invested vast sums of money in the business of instructing and educating youth. Can we honestly say

that at the present time the investment is a paying one?

I have read many violent arraignments of the public school by its friends as well as its enemies. Some of them have laid stress on the inefficiency of the system in preparing boys and girls for their work in the world. Others have emphasized the point that after a course of nine years young people cannot read, write or cipher satisfactorily for ordinary requirements. With these matters at the moment I have nothing to do. But there is one matter which must be plain to reflecting men and women, and this is, that our young people speak their language atrociously. That this, in many cases, is an affectation of youth and not the result of ignorance is not the point. I think the majority of observers will bear me out in saying that children of school age, whether in lower grades or in the colleges, use the worst variety of English that can be sampled among our population. If you doubt this, listen to a bevy of high school girls as long as you can stand it, or a group of boys from one of our noted institutions. You will

find that they use an unintelligible dialect. In fact, correct English seems to be taboo.

This is not merely youthful extravagance. Go among those who have enjoyed all the advantages of modern school training and are occupying prominent places in our social life. You will find that they carry with them the dialect of school days and employ it constantly. I am aware that a certain extreme section of English society has developed an appalling lingo of baby-talk. The speech of our people who are supposed to represent a high average of mind betrays a manner of speaking that has no warrant in reason.

This habitual slovenliness in speaking has become such a marked characteristic in our life that one is almost shocked to listen to a man or woman of the old school who talks without slang, clipped syllables or an affected drawl. I have paid some attention to this matter, and strange to say, I have heard the best and most correct English, not from those who call themselves educated, but from those who have had only the narrowest sort of technical training in schools. I find that the carpen-

ter, the plumber and the grocer give a better example of the vernacular than the college man or society woman. I have noticed a cultivation of tone and language among country people that can be matched only by that of the people of Dublin.

In all this I am far from saying that people cannot speak good English if they so desire. They do not so desire. This is the failure of our school system. It does not instil proper methods of speaking into children. It does not inculcate that reverence for our common tongue, that respect for its integrity which certainly are among the main objects of true education and instruction. It is not impressed upon the boys and girls of our schools that careful use of words and a pleasing intonation are not merely for special occasions, but indispensable for those who would claim the title; lady or gentleman.

Apart from some errors of pronunciation and picturesque use of certain words, the laboring man speaks better and purer English than the professional man. The reason for this is that the first has not been spoiled. The second has an idea that

proper speaking is something to be avoided, like priggishness.

To one who has seen men and cities, the fact is painfully evident that the American people lack a certain respect for the language they speak. You will travel far in the older lands before experiencing a counterpart of this evil national habit. The Oriental, no matter what his station, is a model of correctness in speech. The European, while less flowery, sets careful limits to taking liberties with his language. He sees no reason for degrading or distorting it. It has been left for us to give a horrible example in this regard. I hold no brief just now for or against the public school, but I do contend that the public school fails to turn out scholars who speak English even passably well. Much of this is due, no doubt, to national flippancy and a tendency to haste in expressing ideas, as all else in our life. But it is surely a strange pass that young people on whose education so much money has been spent, speak far less grammatically than the men and women who have cost our school system little if anything at all. If

thirteen or fifteen years spent at books will not suffice to turn out men and women who have the taste and discrimination to use the vernacular decently, is it not time for a real investigation?

BLATHER.

TALLEYRAND stated that language was designed to conceal thought, and one never realizes the profound truth of this observation until circumstances have chained him to a pillar while chattering crowds sweep by, or converted him into a human sandwich in a packed trolley car with conversation furnished free by passengers.

After the first violent nausea passes, the impression that breaks on the listener is the enormous amount of perfectly good talk that is wasted. Ordinarily, when there is a group of two or three, especially of the devout sex, each remark is delivered in triplicate. Next comes the number of words that have no bearing whatever on the topic in hand.

People who are afflicted with excess dignity prefix a variety of semi-articulate sounds to their sentences; others are poor starters and turn themselves back for a second and sometimes third trial; others

still amble along somewhat after the fashion of a distanced horse in a race, talking diligently without anyone on earth being concerned in the least as to the matter or manner of the thought or words produced.

There is still another variety, happily not common, the conversational tyrant who brooks no rivals or interruptions, and when he notices any party eager to enter the lists, pulls some mental lever with a conversational smashup as the result.

Most people have on occasion been told that they talk too much. It is too bad that this great truth is not impressed on the public more often and emphatically, and that there is no sanction attached to it. Probably the only way to enforce any such rule would be to charge so much a word, as the telegraph companies do, or better, like the telephone people, a fixed tariff for the first three minutes, with an increase per minute after that. It is the only way to convince people of the amount of talk they waste.

They who think clearly and speak lucidly and briefly are so rare that some decoration, like the Legion of Honor,

should be conferred upon them, also a pension. The average man or woman who goes to a store or office or bank to speak on anything out of the routine generally conceals thought most successfully—and yet people wonder why clerks appear weary of life. It is not of life but of talk, undigested, amorphous thought, that is poured out over them all day long and every day in the week.

Some hold to Carlyle's extreme statement and maintain that the people are "mostly fools." You will easily ascertain that this is a fallacy by the simple experiment of doing business with them. The trouble is in the expression of thought.

Some people are so constituted that talk comes forth from them, as it were, drop by drop; others wish to heave a subject and its trimmings into your ears, as a drayman heaves a brimming basket, while a third variety comport their conversation after the melancholy fashion familiar to all who have tried to pour liquid from a bottle after the cork has been driven through into the bottle; their conversation is punctuated by gulps and gurgles.

The writer who said of an acquaintance that his conversation was illumined by brilliant flashes of silence uttered a compliment. The impression to be gathered in crowds is that a surprising number of people have made a vow against silence—and keep the vow. There is really no harm in thinking about what you are to say before you attempt to clothe thoughts in words.

In the first place, there is something indelicate, indecorously "intime" in exposing naked mental processes to the world. It reminds one of that peculiar man, in the front of the old almanacs, surrounded by the signs of the zodiac.

Again, it is a charitable thing to allow pauses for thought during conversation, for it may be that others desire to say something.

Certain statisticians tell us the number of words in Shakespeare's vocabulary, and I believe, it is estimated that the average individual uses not more than three hundred, but these emphatically are used. If these three hundred words wore out like children's shoes, half of them would be in

the shop to be heeled and half-soled most of the time, while the owners struggled along on interjections.

There is something positively maddening about the constant repetition of a certain word or expression. What countless thousands of young women who are little more than "sez I" and "sez he" factories, have escaped violent ends simply because murder, even among us, is occasionally punished. Every suffering listener can easily compile his little Purgatorial list.

But, after all the worst conversational plagues are talkers who can enunciate words for hours without a single thought to be sifted from the turgid stream; they go on forever; they are conversational inebriates who should be restrained by law and the parties furnishing them with topics should be prosecuted. Almost everything is taught in the schools now. It is a pity some expert does not open a school to teach people how to keep still.

APPEARANCES.

A CERTAIN society woman recently argued in favor of "dignified gambling." It was her contention that persons of wealth and social position should have gaming rights denied to ordinary folk. Her plea in effect was that great wealth is above law.

There is no doubt that rich men and women assume regal airs, counting regulations as an impertinence. It is difficult to find any justification except caprice for such an attitude. An action is either right or wrong and money cannot change the ethics of the situation. But it always makes the attempt. As "society" is largely an effort to keep all except a favored few out of an exclusive circle, so wealth essays to make law a rule only for "common people."

The feudal noble claimed the privilege of breaking all laws, divine and human, on the principle that God would think twice before condemning a nobleman to eternal

punishment. This is insanity, but it is an enduring taint showing itself century after century. It is seen to evince itself among those whom overmuch money or power has blinded to the existence of unchanging standards of right and wrong.

In past ages this claim of aristocrats that they were above the law obtained a foothold from the fact that a powerful nobleman could tyrannize ecclesiastical authority and induct parasites into chaplaincies and even bishoprics. Lay investiture was an enemy that long gave trouble to the Church, and if the Church failed God alone stood for the right.

In modern times the same claim succeeds even better, because the offenders have divested themselves of belief in the supernatural, conscientious standards and respect for any higher law.

The Sacrament of Penance is a great social leveller. It hews to the line. The sinner undergoes two examinations: first of his own conscience and second by the confessor. When there is no balancing of soul accounts, the individual runs adrift and is guided only by appetite and fear of pub-

lic shame. In process of time this iniquitous rule of conduct has been erected into a sort of fetish. The one thing to which wealthy outlaws cleave is respectability.

Now this respectability is merely titular, a fiction of social law. It has nothing to do with probity, but is an arbitrary limit set to social actions. A man may keep up two establishments, provided there is no public outcry. He may be intoxicated nearly all the time if he does not make a "scene." A "scene" is the unpardonable crime.

Thus it is that all solid standards are set at naught and in their place is built a flimsy stockade to hide unpleasant realities. People may become accustomed to anything, no matter how absurd, and convince themselves that it is a proper code of conduct. This is evidently the case of the woman who argues for "dignified gambling."

The same thing is characteristic of many so-called "reformers." It is not sin or evil life that offends them and which they

strive to remove, but the vulgarity of sin that is publicly offensive.

They do not rebuke drunkenness among their social intimates or immorality among their acquaintances, but drunkenness that is a nuisance and immorality that flaunts itself publicly. They are victims of a mental twist that causes them to mistake grossness as the determining factor in sin.

The Spartans used the drunken slave as a horrid example to their children. The modern "submerged tenth" cite the drunkenness and immorality of the rich as a justification for their own delinquencies.

It is no palliation of the deeds of a malefactor, that he is rich or socially prominent. It is an aggravation of his offense, but in every community there prevails a curious conspiracy against justice, and the basis of this conspiracy is the assumption that rich men can do no wrong.

The radical evil of modern life is identical with that which destroyed the empire of the Caesars and the rule of the French kings, namely, the substitution of "appearances" for the rock-ribbed princi-

ples of right and duty. In the beginning the evil was confined to the ruling class, but it quickly ate its way like a cancer down to the vitals of the government and left the country an easy prey to attack or revolution.

"The divinity that doth hedge a king" is but a legend of the past and the self-constituted aristocrat lives in a house of cards. A breath of revolution will scatter it and its occupants to the winds. The "unchurched" masses are as godless as the classes and give no hostage to appearances or respectability. The millionaire of today holds his wealth by an insecure tenure, for socialism and anarchy are rampant.

It is therefore most injudicious on the part of wealthy people to claim any exemption from the laws established for the well-being and order of the community, for the wealthy idle on the slopes of a social volcano. The feminine gambler ingenuously voiced a sentiment unduly prevalent among her class, but generally covert.

Any close student of modern times and conditions must reach one of two conclusions. Either the spreading irreligion

must be checked by a return to conscientious standards braced up by living faith in God, or it will certainly end by destroying utterly the existing social fabric and open the gates to an anarchy the consequences of which no man can foresee.

THE AUTUMNAL DIRGE.

HE who is untouched by the melancholy of the Autumn winds is either a pachyderm or an arrant optimist. He must be either rooted and grounded in gladness or be destitute of feeling. No matter how merry the company or loud the gaiety, the lull comes when the ear is assailed by the mournful wail of the wind. Like the Greek chorus, it breaks in on the drama, singing vaguely of woe.

But it is when one is alone that the potency of the wind-spirits becomes a force almost personal. It is a ceaseless knocking at the gates of attention, like the crying of a child in the night or the whining of an injured animal at the door. It plays upon the naked nerves. We suddenly realize the meaning of the old pagan cry: "Great Pan is dead." The glory of the Summer is departed, the flowers are withered, the grain is laid away. The skeleton trees keep watch over the waste, and Na-

ture makes moan over the destruction of all she watched and tended. The earth is a vast necropolis, and the sky is oppressed with gloom.

But the dominant quality of this tragic music is its insistence. You cannot escape it. The air is stirred to voices and repeats ceaselessly: "Alas! Alas." It is a plaint like that of Rachel mourning over her children and refusing to be comforted. The sounds rise and fall, are now loud, now soft, but the sad theme of the wind chorus never changes.

Autumn is an eerie season. Winter makes the land a desert and is satisfied. The rapture of Spring brings no forebodings. Summer sunk in repletion has no space for introspection, but Autumn is filled with mystery and presage of ill. Its myriad voices sing in a minor key, bodying forth the two last great conscious realities of life, regret and dread. It is not merely the dirge of the dead Summer the Autumn winds sing. We know they rehearse our own Requiem.

There is a terrifying multiple personality about those winds. It is as if lost

souls wandering over the scenes of wasted lives bemoaned neglected opportunities and the contemned virtue that brings ultimate joy. You cannot see them, or interrogate them. You can only surmise their grief. Around the windows they flit and beat their hands and wail. The cadence has not one note of gladness, but is filled with death and lamentation. You can translate it into words and ever they shape themselves into the same strain: "Alas! Alas!

Small wonder that the nations of Northern Europe, nurtured under the spell of such winds as these evolved their weird mythology. They listened all their lives to that sad, spectral music. It was woven into the fibre of their being, this instinctive realization of mysterious voices, of vague unutterable grief. They looked forth at the visible world and Nature justified their inward vision and lent a touch of reality to a scheme of things wherein right failed just as its triumph was due, joy was struck down in the heyday of youth, and the wind spirits chanted mournful music over the graves of shattered hopes.

Here, too, we see the origin of the Banshee. Figure to yourself the lonely cabin on the moor or the bleak mountain, the mother with her children about her knee, and beyond in the room the dead father. The night wind sweeps by with a shriek and she clasps the little ones tightly, for it is the Banshee! A crowd gathered about the fire in some great castle hears in the momentary silence the shrill cry of the wind. Yes, there will be a death soon, for the Banshee is abroad!

It is the preparedness of the mind for the mysterious, the expectancy of the unearthly, that give the Autumn wind its melancholy power. The whole world seems to be awaiting something in awe. An indefinable feeling grips the heart. The being is swept by a nameless dread. A cold fear lays its finger upon the soul. Then man becomes Nature's Aeolian harp, and on his heart strings she plays her minor symphonies. Once the ear is attuned to that mystic music anything may happen. The actual world recedes. The spirits take the stage. Out of this mental condition come the ghost stories, the marvelous folk-lore,

the tales of unaccountable disappearances. It is the very brooding ground of wraiths, and the wind provides fit accompaniment for the uncanny necromancy.

We live on the borderland of the mysterious. There is a faculty within us that makes that mysterious more real than the things which we touch and see, and never more so than in the gloomy stage setting of the November night, when the earth-noises are stilled and the wind-spirits hold court in the far reaches of the upper air. Before the eyes of fancy, spectral shapes swing and reel, multitudes of shades bow their heads and moan. The legion of the lost ones returns to earth to expiate in sigh and lament the sins of wasted years. The listener, held rigid by that compelling choral undertone of the solemn wind, galvanizes his past years. They troop by, each with averted visage. It is the masque of life endowed with vocal power. All the sadness of life is compressed within that span. Outside the wind keeps up its interminable plaint, and within him the quivering heart-strings repeat the mournful song: "Oh for the sweetness of the

youth that is gone, the feeling of unwearied strength, the uplifting of unscarred hope, the vanished glory of life's Springtime." And the wind chorus repeats its moan. Alas! Alas!

THE SEEKERS.

LEAVING aside the great body of men and women who find the concrete problem of earning a living quite sufficient to engage their attention and energies, and considering the minority who, by position and advantages, are enabled to take an active interest in humanity as a whole and to exert a predominant influence on the times in which they live, we discern two camps set over against one another. The watchword of one is: look for the fine things in life, that of the other is: look for what is despicable. Both these camps are filled with people of great earnestness and ability, but their energies in each case are bent in opposite directions.

Life is so compacted of good and bad hopelessly mingled, it is so vast in its reach and even the keenest human mind is so inadequate an instrument for a true survey, that the question resolves itself into this: What are you seeking?

You will always find in mankind what

you seek. If you are buoyed up by faith and charity, life will show itself to you in a benign aspect, every ill will have its attendant compensation. If you have no faith and think that humanity is utterly depraved and selfish, you will come on only too many evidences to support your theory.

How few of all the publicists who put forth their views in print are animated by the spirit of fairness! The great majority start out with an inherited or pre-conceived theory and hunt for facts to bear it out. Whether it be a question of religion, sociology or politics, men tend to be partisans rather than honest students.

For more than three hundred years history as written in the English language has been a conspiracy against the truth. The shibboleth was: No good can come out of the Catholic Church. So they set to work to travesty and vilify it. Anything in its favor was tabooed, nothing against it was too vile to magnify. They sought, not truth, but the despicable phases of history, and in the great muckheap thrown out by seventeen centuries

they found plenty to bolster up their malign theory.

The main trend of modern humanitarianism is to consider man, not as a creature of soul and body, but as a higher order of animal. It endeavors to improve the baser part of man, the body. It started out by eliminating the soul and then attempted to formulate life standards that would be workable. Man is an animal, though this is but part of the story, but if you take it as the axiom you can always find instances to prove it.

The basic principle of very many who are working for the purification of politics and for good government seems to be that the people are unfit to govern themselves, that if left alone they will choose unworthy representatives, and therefore the only thing to do is so to restrict and bend suffrage that power shall rest in the hands of a few whose theories of government must prevail.

Here again there is no honest study of conditions on the basis of equal citizenship, but an abiding distrust of democracy.

There is a consistent error in these

three great departments of human activity, and though all ages have seen its workings, the present age beholds its fine flower and fruition. The error is that respectability is a substitute for religion. Working on that theory a powerful class has attempted to control society.

What was the basic idea of that Puritan religious system, which under one guise or another, has been the opponent of the Church for three centuries? External dignity of a particularly repellant sort. The church must give way to the bare meeting house, the natural enthusiasm of religion must be changed to a cold formalism, the spontaneous gaiety of life must be swathed in iron bands!

What is the main intent of professional social workers? To make the poor respectable. Teach them to care for their bodies, for, forsooth! they have no souls to care for. Put the young in schools where their minds may be sharpened, for only thus can they survive in the race of life. The self-respect that comes of education is to shape their moral conduct. These people usurp the place of God in society. They attempt

to exile Him, to make humanity over to fit their gloomy theories of life.

What is the main aim of the political reformer? To obtain a government of "respectables." Hound the petty grafter, exterminate the ward politician, not because they are criminal, but because they are vulgar. Manage government by means of a well-mannered oligarchy. Financiers who steal millions respect the social amenities and must be immune. The gigantic violations of law that double the price of the necessaries of life can await the purification of politics!

Such performances do not excite horror because their authors are prominent in the nation and of great wealth. But the basic error is that immense peculations cannot be bad because the authors are respectable.

Does this give pause to those whose influence is paramount in the land? Not at all. They have made up their minds, they have formulated their theories and facts must square with them. There are two words that describe them and their procedure perfectly: "Whited Sepulchres."

POPULAR TASTE.

IT was said not long ago that the remarks of prize-fighters are more read than the speeches of the greatest statesmen. Why not? The reading public has more in common with the pugilist than with the statesman. The man of high thought is always sure of a small audience, but he must be content that it is small. Few have the intelligence and taste to enjoy the best speaking and thinking, while millions are interested in the words of a man who has fought his way to eminence with no more protection to his hands than two-ounce gloves. A very few enjoy both and their exploits, the catholics of the intellectual world.

Most people want their pabulum predigested. As it is with breakfast foods so with reading. They do not want to take trouble. They want some one to do the thinking and give them the results in language easy to grasp. The public wants

its political news, that is, news about important state matters and without any sensational qualities, in the smallest possible compass and in the fewest possible words. This is the secret of the "Yellow Press" and the sensational editorial. They take the responsibility of thinking from the reader and interest without tiring him.

But to go back to the original contention; who will allege that the remarks of any eminent senator can vie in interest for the people with the remarks of an eminent pugilist? The senator speaks to a select and scholarly coterie of men who wrestle with the intricate problems of tariff, currency and military matters, all about as attractive to an ordinary man as a table of logarithms. But the pugilist speaks to the whole country as the crowned king of fisticuffs, a game which every boy has played with varying skill and success in earlier days. It is pretty well admitted that no one thoroughly understands the currency question, but everyone understands fighting, and more enjoy it than are willing to confess it.

The land is covered with schools and

people are very much in earnest about education, but it seems to be a fact that the great majority of men and women, after having left school revert intellectually to a savage state, something after the manner of the educated Indian returning to the tepee. They reach their intellectual level. The school often puts on the mind a coating of culture that does not "strike in" and which peels off in the shock and scramble of life as weather removes poor paint from a building. I believe that a much larger number of people than is generally supposed are impervious to education as ordinarily understood, at least they throw it aside on entering actual life as the college graduate puts off his cap and gown.

Here is a vast public, the sham-educated and the frankly and joyously ignorant to whom the easy writer appeals irresistibly. If he is a newspaper man he colors up the happenings of the day, the comedies and tragedies of actual present human life. If he is a novelist he invents situations and weaves a plot to hold the reader enthralled. Always the method is the same. The reader is inter-

ested without having to think too hard.

There is another point. Those whose lives are quiet and humdrum, who have no adventures in life seek adventures in books, and this on the whole is a very prudent and safe way of having adventures. Moreover, a man sees romance and adventure in every line of life except his own, which to him is sordid fact. Detective stories appeal to everybody except the detective. Political stories bore the politician. It is only the working out of the old fallacy. The other side of the road always looks smoother to the traveler. As the great majority of people lead narrow and simple lives their ideals of happiness and adventure are correspondingly commonplace.

The literary taste of the average reader is execrably bad. He all but creates badly written books by the demand he voices for such reading matter. He does not appreciate and will not buy well thought out and well written books. What he wants is trash. And so the people who are literary purveyors or panders, whether in the newspapers, the magazines, or

publishing offices, furnish the reading public with what it seeks—for a consideration—and everybody is satisfied.

There is much talk about the blessings of modern education in comparison with the widespread ignorance of times gone by, yet the universal schooling which has been spread out so thin over the land has resulted in a debasement of literary taste which would be incomprehensible to the thinking man of a century ago.

DEMAGOGUES.

THERE is something pathetic about a political campaign. The excitement, the gatherings of delegates, the heated oratory, are merely surface manifestations. It is all theatrical. As at a play, one instinctively thinks, not of the pageant and the lines spoken by the actors, but of the real agents behind the scenes, for whose benefit the public pays and applauds. No man can be either so good or so bad as a political candidate is pictured by supporters or opponents.

The real hero of the convention and the election is not the man whose name is on every lip or the skilful manager who succeeds in placing his chief in the coveted position, but that great moral person, the people, in whose name all are acting, yet who seems to gain little, whatever the issue of the conflict.

Each time the chosen men of various parties assemble in some city to settle nominations, they gather to give that

blind and manacled Samson, the "plain people," an opportunity to burst his shackles and assume control. The pathos lies in the fact that the shackles are not burst. There is a terrific struggle. The friends of Samson plead his cause and cheer their cohorts, but when all is over, Samson is still in his gyves.

A presidential year is a momentous epoch for every workingman in the land. If he could voice his woes in the convention, there would be a long step forward, but the trouble is, the ordinary man fails to understand the issues. There are so many self-styled representatives clamoring to be lifted to the place of leader, that the plain citizen is bewildered. He suffers from a plethora of champions, each claiming to be the real one.

It is often stated that there is a lack of issues; that there are now no great questions, like slavery, to arouse the mass of citizens. There is the usual patter about the tariff, "interests" and the cost of living. Men come forward with political panaceas, such as the Initiative and Referendum. We have seen how hollow is the

promise of the loudly trumpeted "primary," for only a small fraction of the voters go to the polls at all.

Samson is blind and bound. He cannot effectively voice the cruelty and injustice which he suffers. What he needs is a man who will do for him what Lincoln did for the slave. Lincoln's name and fame are much spoken of but one looks in vain among popular leaders for a personality that recalls the great Emancipator and the mantle they try to drape about themselves is much too large.

It is said that the day of conventions is passing, that they will be replaced by some more effective manner of choosing candidates. Yet there is much to be said in favor of conventions. Convention day is the one day in years when Samson can make his pathetic appeal for justice. The gathering of men from all parts of the land does focus attention on wrongs and grievances as hardly anything else can. Doubtless there is much commercialism on these occasions, yet the convention of today is vastly different from the one of twenty years ago. It is more turbulent

because the people realize their disabilities more keenly. There is less sentimental talk and more plain speech about practical issues.

Why should the ideal convention be as calm as a pink tea? Such quiet would indeed be a sign of despotism. Men who are really in earnest are careless of parliamentary law. Violence is sometimes disgraceful, yet it must be admitted that millions of our people labor under conditions that are disgraceful. These are the real issues of a campaign and they are sedulously kept out of sight by party managers and instead much eloquence is wasted on abstractions.

We must have our demagogues. The demagogue is an imposter. This is significant. The multiplicity of pretenders is evidence that there are in the land men worthy of high office. We have had such leaders in the past and we shall have them again. It may not happen this time or four years later, but the day is surely approaching when out of the ruck of a turbulent convention will rise one who will be without rhetoric or bombast a

Tribune of the "plain people." With this conviction we can afford to bear a little longer with the demagogue. He is the impersonator of the leader who is to come.

THE GLAD HAND.

THE cynic ever finds in mankind material for his ungracious trade. He scoffs at politeness as hypocrisy and kindliness as a counterfeit. He will have it that all who are cheery are actuated by selfish motives. To him all fruit that is fair to the eye is bitter to the taste. He is a mental dyspeptic and naturally to his eyes mankind is a humbug and life a sham.

Even men who think they eschew cynicism insensibly take an attitude of disbelief in pleasant manners. They expect too much from their neighbors. No matter how a man comports himself, he is wrong. according to these theories. If he be reserved, he acquires the reputation of haughtiness. If he radiates good nature, he is supposed to have an axe to grind. When we are reserved we expect others to recognize our position as proper; if we put ourselves out to be pleasant, we are wroth to be told it is assumed. Why

not give the other man the benefit of the same measure?

The misapprehension all comes from keeping a strict code of responsibilities for other people and an easy one for ourselves. If we are looking out for our own interests, is it wrong for others to do the same? What does humanity owe us that it must give us something for nothing?

We hear of great bargains, bargains too good to be true. We ought to know that merchants seldom sell at a loss and that if they are so compelled, it is mean to realize on their hard necessity. But we do not think of that. We are perfectly willing to purchase goods at a price far below their real value. We sally forth to get something cheap. We find that it is indeed cheap, that we have about what we paid for. Then we straightway berate the merchant as a thief.

You are introduced to a man who seems the incarnation of kindness and good-fellowship. You find his society delightful and insensibly you begin to count on this as your right, and in the attempt to realize on good nature, you find that there is

steel beneath the velvet. Ten to one, you denounce your quondam friend as insincere. You were looking out for your own interest all the time. You tried to play the game unfairly and half your chagrin comes from the realization that after all he is the better man.

You meet a man of high position who is more democratic and good natured than most of his class, who puts himself out to talk with you, takes an interest in your prospects and your family. He owes you nothing. His kindness is a free gift. You begin to think you own this man. On occasion you encounter him in the company of others of his set. To your suspicious eye his greeting is cold. He does not introduce his friends to you. You say to yourself, "He is a snob. I am good enough when he is alone, but not good enough when he is with rich friends!" Why should he introduce you to his friends? They have not asked it, nor have you. Perhaps they do not want to know you, and if he attempted to play the good fellow, both you and he might experience a rebuff. A man can be answerable for himself, but not for

his friends or acquaintances. You were the snob. You wanted to be able to say, "I am well acquainted with such and such a rich man."

Kindness is worth while for its own sake. It is a good in itself. Even if its expression were insincere beyond a doubt, it would be still an agency for good. It makes life easier. Civilization must be a bit insincere. Solid gold must have some alloy to make it practical for use. You, too, are committed to a host of small insincerities. You meet an undesirable acquaintance and tell him you are glad to see him. Nothing of the kind! You write to Smith about a disputed bill and begin the letter with "Dear Smith." Now Smith is dear only in a monetary way. You finish your letter by "Yours sincerely." You visit a dying friend and hypocritically tell him he will soon be well again though death is written on his face. You congratulate another on his marriage though he really needs condolences and you know it.

All dolls are stuffed with sawdust. All toys are make believe. Why tear the doll apart to view the melancholy contents or

break the toy in sheer ill humor! They gave real pleasure. You can pick life apart, too, and find it nothing but sadness and disappointment with death to crown it all. The strongest and bravest whistle to keep their spirits up. Nothing lasts. Beauty fades, joy palls and life ever promises what it cannot perform.

Shall we therefore join the cynics and make life worse than needs be? We are all aboard a sinking ship; it is only a matter of time. What use to whimper, or curse, or in other ways add to the sum of misery of our fellows? It is far better to affect a bravery we do not feel, a cheerfulness in part assumed, that others may not suffer unnecessary grief.

This is taking life on an all but pagan basis. There is one thing that fails not, faith. There is one promise that will be redeemed in full, heaven, if we are fit for it. There is one Friend who will never fail us if we do our duty, Christ. The kindest man is the truly religious man, for his joy springs like the water that responded to the touch of Moses' wand, from the rock.

Kindliness is indestructible. No part of it is ever wasted and humanity bids us give of it the best we can, for even the counterfeit is better than surliness.

CHILDHOOD.

EDEN doubtless had long been a dim, delightful memory to our first parents before they died. After the loss of their original innocence they were changed and the world was changed for them. Though the children of Adam are born into a saddened world there is a paradise which they enjoy during the first few years of their lives, while still they are innocent and untroubled, and before they are thrust out into the wilderness of toil and worry. But once the fairy portals have silently closed behind them they are changed. Something has been obliterated from their minds.

Once in a while a dim picture of that far off time may come back to them, as Eve may have recalled some scene of her first home. Sometimes above the clang of the world may drift in an elusive bit of melody from a song that ceased years before, but the beauty and freshness of creation as it is mirrored in childish eyes re-

turns not after they are seared by experience. The laughter that bubbles from young lips is a lost art in maturity. No! when we pass out of childhood, we are shut out forever, exiles.

Children know instinctively that their elders are alien beings, that they themselves live in a world as different from ours as if it were in another planet. Children never reveal themselves entirely. They cannot. They have secret springs of joy that we never find, visions that to them are realities. We knew these things once, but that knowledge has passed away.

Children are happier than grown-up people, but that happiness is founded on ignorance and illusion! Perhaps. All worldly happiness is similarly based. Prometheus toiled only to win agony. Worldly knowledge is pain. Children are spared it. Enter a city in the twilight. Dimness enshrouds all unpleasant sights, smooths down ugly angles, converts a scraggy patch of trees into a little park. It is with eyes reprieved from the tawdriness of things that the child beholds the world.

But in another way the child sees more than we do. The grimy tramp slouching along the road is for him a hero of adventure, laborers going to work are bent on secret and important missions, drivers of wagons are voyagers who know what is going on in the dim beyond. He is girt about by delightful mysteries in the very presence of common things. In a very true sense the child is right too. The knights of the road do have romantic adventures, even as did their forerunners of the lance and corselet, as Jack London has explained to us. Laborers are bent on an important mission—earning their living, and so secret is it that thousands die because they cannot discover it. Drivers have a wide and valuable knowledge of the world. The child's instinct is wiser than our experience.

The secret of this lies in the fact that to a child no object is simply what older folk know it to be. Everything is protean. He fights Indians all day in a small yard and sticks are the Indians. He rides leagues on a hobby horse without moving ten feet. He circumnavigates the globe by

means of a shingle boat in a puddle. These are mighty privileges.

The supposed misery of poor children is doubtless exaggerated. Given food and air, they can be happier than their elders with all that wealth can buy, for the poorest of them holds fairyland in fee simple and sprites we never see do his bidding.

There is a freemasonry among all children. They tolerate grown-up people but never admit them to the secrets of the craft. Watch a man or woman talking to a group of children. It is like seeking information in the enemy's country. There is a veiled hostility beneath their politeness, and when the interview is over, they run away intent on some mystic business which it interrupted. If you are very wise and patient with these small, secretive creatures, you may get a peep into the realities of their proceedings, but never a satisfactory view. And justly so. You have been expelled from that society and have forgotten the grip and pass word. Its doings are not for you to know. Children understand this and treat you accordingly.

Doubtless this is the explanation of much of the difficulty in taking care of children, a misunderstanding of the situation. Naturally the father thinks it strange that his small daughter cries and dances when compelled to pass a large tree in the evening. He does not appreciate that the tree is a very bad giant, and she will never tell him. The mother who stumbles over a pile of bricks in the area way would not be so cross if she understood that she had demolished Aladdin's palace. It will never be told by her little boy. We are well meaning but blundering ogres of the childish fairyland.

Contrast the helplessness of mature people, their inability to amuse themselves, their running to theatres, getting up entertainments to escape boredom, with the resourcefulness of a child who finds everything in the world so interesting that he is always, as it were, at the circus. He makes his enjoyment out of the most unpromising materials. He plans and stages his dramas on boards that even Shakespeare would call bare. He really enjoys life. We are case-hardened. We have walked out

of the fairy ring and forgotten the spell to bring us back. The door is closed and we cannot recall: "Open sesame." And the little ragamuffin in the puddle knows the charm and enters as he lists.

THE BECKONING WEST.

IT is quite likely that Kipling's soldier in the dull and dreary weather of England heard "the East a-calling," for the dreamy and voluptuous life of the Orient holds a strong appeal for Tommy Atkins. But for most men these many centuries gone, it is rather the West that has beckoned and called to the men of the East. From that cradle of the race in far off Asia men have now for many hundreds of years set their eyes and their feet towards the setting sun. They went across the wide steppes down into Europe. Some settled, the others went on.

The progress continued until the pilgrims had reached the sea, and there for a time their journey was interrupted. They settled all over Europe, crossed even to the islands of the North, harrying and occupying until the lands were filled, and new and old races intermingling began what we now call modern Europe.

But there came a time when the beckon-

ing finger could no longer be denied. Columbus and those who imitated him, set out for the West across the vast deep in the small ships of those days, and so at last this Western World of ours was discovered and occupied by those of the older lands.

Here began anew the old story. At first the settlements were along the sea coast, a mere fringe on the moist hem of this great continent. But something in the blood of the men who came from over seas throbbed in their children, who pushed onward to the West. Every variety of danger and privation faced them, but they would not be stayed. As we read the story of the first overland pilgrims, it is as if they were Crusaders on a new quest or seekers after the Holy Grail. Decade by decade the wilderness took its toll of life and blood, and steadily gave before the indomitable march of man, until at last the invaders crossed the Rockies and stood at the shores of the Pacific, whose far off waters wash the East where humanity was cradled. So there is nothing more to do unless men are to con-

tinue on to the Westward until they reach the East again.

All along the world-path that marks the successive progress of the migration of the nations stand great cities and rich fields occupied by men and women who are perfectly sure that the place where they live is the finest on the globe, and it is well that this is so, for contentment is the secret of life. But along with this satisfaction goes a certain contempt for those who live in newer lands, where life is raw and crude, where people are not polished down to a uniform smoothness and conventionality.

The average European today looks on us with a self-complacent toleration. When we go abroad to look at their treasures of art and architecture, to visit the scenes of the tales we have read in childhood, those who live in those lands think we are paying them a compliment, when as a matter of fact it is merely a pilgrimage we are making to the shrines of our ancestors. The average Englishman to this day smiles somewhat at the "Yankee." We make a good deal of after dinner talk, which is

accepted at its face value by the recipients; at least they enjoy all the aroma there is in this post prandial incense. The Englishman never realizes that the average American would go mad if he were condemned to live the life of England.

So, too, in our own land, the dwellers along the Atlantic are apt to feel quite complacent when they think of the West. They say: Our sons have made it what it is. That is true. But they forget that it was the beckoning of the West to the best and strongest and most adventurous among those nurtured in New England and on the Atlantic Coast that has drawn these mighty men who have built out there on the plains and across the Mississippi a veritable Empire. They forget that New England has been bled almost to the white that the West might grow. They forget, too, that these sons who have gone forth from them are in spirit and sympathy all but aliens, that they would feel as ill at ease and cramped by the stiffness and numberless conventionalities of ancestral neighborhoods as some lusty youngster in a stately parlor.

The East woos the man who longs for languor, the tropic sunlight, the dreamy life, the aromatic winds of the lands of "dolce far niente." But the West woos men, strong, active men with red blood bounding in their arteries. It is like the rain that beats against the face of the sailor as his boat goes onward to sea, the snow blast that stings the cheek of the traveller who pushes forward on some errand of import. The very opposition is a caress, like the wild gaiety and freshness of a young girl. So will the West call men always, not to ease and luxury, but to work and effort. It is this attraction that has made this nation what it is, mighty and self-reliant. Many a man whom life condemns to remain like a peg in a hole, who is tied down by duty and unescapable obligations, feels within him that tremendous rush, hears in the ears of fancy that cry that echoes across the centuries, the cry that men first heard in the far East ages ago, and following, made the world what it is.

THE MORNING INTERVAL.

WE are born again each morning. The night has swept away the anxieties of the preceding day, and we open our eyes to find all things new. Sleep gives a sort of reprieve from the effects of past trouble, and it is only when we violate the tacit compact and rush back into the turmoil of life, that the peace vouchsafed by the healing hours of unconsciousness leaves us and the excitement of the world resumes its sway.

Of course there is work to be done. The problems of livelihood must be faced. Outside our door is the burden of duties which we must lift again to our shoulders. But there is no need of hurry. It is a mistake to rise as if the house were afire, dress in haste, snatch a morsel or two and run to work. It is harmful for the body and more so for the mind. The soul is never so conscious of its individuality and independence, so entirely master of itself as in the interval between waking and work.

It is indeed one of the worst characteristics of this age of unrest that it tends to make people live mechanically. They lose that invaluable power of surveying themselves as distinct and accountable beings and all others as outsiders. The morning interval is the best time of the entire day. The body is refreshed by sleep, the mind detached from the mesh of engagements and anxieties that occupy and vex the later waking hours. It is a time of normality. Once we open the door all the Cares troop in, even as they burst forth from Pandora's box, and sometimes indeed Hope comes not in with them. It is well to put off this inevitable moment until we have readjusted ourselves and are able to receive the intruders with dignity and calm.

The man who goes forth in the morning to his appointed duty is in a way disguised; first in the clothes he wears, a concession to conventionality, and again in his manner to those whom he meets, a concession to civility and good-fellowship. One must adjust himself to each friend and acquaintance. But the robe of sleep is the

badge of freedom. We can afford the luxury of being what we are, without allowances or reservations. Conventionalities must be. They are part of our gain from barbarism. But like taxes for the common good, they are irksome to the individual.

But we need never worry that the world will not obtain its own. The Roman citizen who vainly sought to escape Caesar and the Eastern sage who tried to outrun death were no more certain to be captured than the man or woman who in our day strives to bid defiance to the conventions of modern life.

But there is no need to wear our chains as ornaments. Some people appear to be compact of conventionality, to possess no "Ego," to be institutions like the newspaper or railroad station, and not persons; doubtless for the reason that they do not know what self communion means. But the generality of folk, though close pressed on all sides by the world, keep certain chambers of the soul locked against all comers, reserve certain tokens that mean much to themselves and nothing to others. Hence it is always a gruesome experience

to go over the keepsakes of a dead friend. We come upon many objects that spoke in a secret language to the one who is gone. We seem to be intruders in the lodgings of a departed soul.

These considerations apply to normal men and women whose sleep is natural and sufficient, and who awaken to the consciousness of health. Drug-bought sleep presents its bill in the morning, the first bill of the day and the hardest to pay, the more so that its presentation breaks in on a time that should be sacred, like a bailiff entering a chamber with a writ.

So for those who lie down worn with sickness and awaken to lift again to their weary shoulders the cross of pain. The sufferer sees himself in an unreal light, his musings are apt to be abnormal. But most pitiable of all is he to whom the night brings no peace, whose forehead is never touched by the light fingers of the Angel of Sleep, who stares with open eyes into the darkness and hears the sullen hours grind on until the chill morning breaks, welcome only because it is not night. Insomnia, mother of maniacs!

Such unfortunates feel in the early hours not their own but an alien consciousness; they are robbed of the blessed interval.

As in all things in life except sorrow and death, the morning comes to no one in such joyful guise, with such radiant, dancing feet as to the child. He is Nature's darling to whom she pours out all her treasures with open hands. So the laughter of children in the early day is as natural as the sunrise song of the awakened birds. Both salute the morn with a hymn, untaught yet perfect.

We owe it to ourselves to devote some time before the work of the day to self communion, to becoming acquainted with ourselves, for the day comes when we can no more lean upon the world, and we need the strength that comes of that silent soul talk. The hardest battles of life are solitary battles, and the last great fight, in which we must die to win, will be fought by you and by me alone.

ACCOMPLISHMENT.

DIGNITY is the last shred of respectability to which many who have lost everything else still cling. Dignity is a good cane, but a poor crutch. Like an old family name or armorial bearings, it is a fine adjunct, but a small asset.

Centuries ago civilization was crystallized. The noble had his fixed and guaranteed place in society, the commoner was content with a lower but still worthy condition, and the serf toiled hopelessly in the depths. Life and events in almost every land have played havoc with these time-honored institutions. Civilization today is in a half-molten state; it hardens and then liquifies. Nothing is settled.

Practically the only institution of the Western world that has preserved the respect of men for its order and orders is the Catholic Church, and for this reason; the Catholic Church uses external dignity merely as an adjunct. She is always ready to yield "storied fanes" and rich vestments

when principles are at stake, and go forth with staff and scrip like the Apostles. Denuded of power, shorn of wealth, given over to persecution, she promptly takes root again and with divine vigor is soon as strong as before.

Everything else has gone by the board. Emperors and kings stand daily at the bar of public opinion; they are ridiculed as easily as beggars and all their royal state goes for nothing. A sort of social clairvoyance has set in that rates with brutal frankness and a sort of rough justice gentle and simple alike. This may be dangerous, a sign of decay, subversive of order and hostile to the best interests of mankind, but it is a fact.

Yet there was never a time when a certain segment of society, and in a way, an important one, ran faster and harder after honors and titles. People are rarely concerned with the shadow of greatness until the substance has departed. Many names meant much in Europe three centuries ago. They mean nothing today except in history. This is not necessarily the fault of those who now bear the

names. The conditions have changed. The coin is accepted no more in the marts.

Yet American girls commit themselves incontinent to marriage with needy titles, crazed by the desire to be called by an old name, anxious to gain a place whose glory has passed these two or three hundred years, and hard-headed fathers, who by soul-destroying struggles have amassed millions bestow them upon strangers as if under the influence of some magic spell. All sorts of charlatans affect absurd and sounding appellations and succeed in getting themselves accepted at their face value.

Still this phenomenon is more apparent than real. It affects deeply an over-advertised minority, who have used up life, exhausted the gamut of the emotions and are spoiled by success. The magnate of the Cinquecento, having conquered his city or province, turned to collecting antiques. The magnate of the Twentieth Century, having made himself master of a Trust, the sole dispenser of some life-necessity, some trade essential, turns to collecting antiques, sons-in-law with ancient names.

The sane and vigorous majority is concerned with these things only as reading matter. When one leaves the stifling atmosphere of wealth and imitation grandeur for the wide plains wherein men work and struggle, he finds a very different code and rating system. First of all, men admire effectiveness. "The man who does things" is the man of the millions. Next, effectiveness possessing also grace and dignity is a combination to conjure with, the modern "philosopher's stone," that transmutes all things to gold.

Active men resent dignity alone as a variety of false pretence. Success alone, while winning respect, still lacks the gracious something, but the two combined in one man take the highest place by unanimous vote. This is nothing new. The old play still keeps the boards, but the stage carpenter, Circumstance, has designed new scenery. Men have always been guided by the self-same rule in electing their leaders and heroes. In bloodier days, when landmarks were unsettled and war the most prosperous business, amid the clash of shields and on gory fields, they

lifted the soldier to their shoulders and shouted his name in glad acclaim. Today, amid the clang of manufactures, on the fierce battlefield of trade, they lift up the captain of industry, the strategist of affairs. It is always the same type of man who wins the plaudits and wields the power. Men made the kings, dukes and earls of dead and gone centuries for the same reason and by the same rule that today they make the rulers who sway commerce and politics. The type of man that founded European dynasties and made the names "that ring down the corridors of time," if translated to our day, would command men just the same. Our modern magnates thrust back a few centuries would establish kingdoms by the same inevitable law.

Why then should we bother about honors and name-handles? The public has its own code of nobility and enforces it with an iron hand. It is not concerned with virtue as such, or uprightness as such, but with effectiveness. Every man has his rating in that list, a rating irrespective of genealogy, strictly according to the

measure of his proven ability, but in the highest place of that "fierce democracie" always sits the man of effectiveness and dignity.

TODAY.

IT IS quite the fashion to extol the past and malign the present. There is nothing new about this attitude. A certain number of people are always out of joint with the age in which they live. There are many factors in modern life that tend to accentuate and exaggerate this attitude, though this too may be alleged in defence of any period. There are many advocates abroad preaching the gospel of discontent and emphasizing everything that can make people fancy themselves ill used. One of these factors is the daily newspaper focusing the concentrated woes and horrors of the world on the individual. Another is the scolding magazine that exists only to find fault with the universe as it is constituted. Now the average reader is an idolater; he worships the daily printed word; to him it is infallible. He may doubt many things: the existence of God, the inspiration of the Bible, the immortality of the soul, but he never

thinks of doubting what is served up to him morning and evening on a wood-pulp flimsy.

One point on which the evangelists of trouble are insistent is that the world is going to the dickens; that the poor were never so ill treated, the rich so heartless and the whole social economy so hopelessly wrong. It is possible to illustrate this unhealthy state of mind by the example of a wife who has not enough to do. She compares her lot with what she sees of other women. She compares her husband with what she hears and sees of other men. She discounts every blessing that is hers and magnifies every comfort that surrounds others. There is only one seeming hope on her horizon, divorce! In a way, it may be said of modern society that it dreams of divorce from facts, from certain evils that must be, from certain pains that must be borne, and hugs the delusion that another alliance will bring all it sighs for.

If one has a bit of the judicial temperament, he will grow weary of this constant plaint of discontented folk who abuse the age in which they live as if it were the

abomination of desolation. The fact is, this generation is spoiled. It has so many things that it cries for the impossible like an ill-tempered child. A little reading of history would do much to change the view of our chronic complainers. If they were to go back in spirit a few years or decades and sense what men and women had to bear, it might open their eyes.

Without dwelling on the present state of things across the Atlantic, it is many a year since we felt the horror of war and many more since our people saw an enemy in their streets. Long ago the great pestilences have been conquered by the sleepless brain of science. Long ago the intolerable discomforts of travel and communication have been eliminated by the capitalists we are so fond of abusing. In fact, the world has been made what it is for our benefit. The very poor, the pariahs, are the same in every century, but the average man and woman of today have such comforts as would amaze the rich of fifty years ago.

Recently I visited several handsome mansions of the ante-bellum type, ad-

mired their graceful lines, stately furniture and indescribable dignity. Then there came to me the comparison. The people who lived in these beautiful houses had not a tithe of the conveniences that the day laborer has at present. A bath room was undreamed of, steam heat or hot water systems unthought of, the telephone would have started a witchcraft craze. A train that would bear the traveler one hundred miles comfortably in three hours would have been laughed to scorn by the stalwart folk who occupied these solid dwellings. Then consider illumination, even that provided through the medium of the execrated Rockefeller, not to mention acetylene and the radiance that Edison has given us. Finally, think of the great matter of food. The Roman exquisite revelled in his banquet of assembled foods from distant parts of the empire. The modern clerk or mechanic sits down to a meal that assembles the products of a continent and thinks himself badly served.

Some student would render a service to us by investigating the meaning of the word, "comfort," in different epochs of his-

tory. Not but what misery exists, and extortion and cruelty! Man never yet has evolved a scheme of life that eliminated these things. The fact is, the standard of living has shifted. People demand as necessities what the fortunate of earlier days regarded as luxuries. How the workman of a century ago would have rejoiced in the eight-hour working day, in the comforts that warm the modest home, in the clothing that covers people of small incomes! What amusement had the people of New England seventy-five years ago? None but what they devised themselves. Now you can stand in a village street and watch the wives and children of poor families stream into the moving-picture theatre. The dwellers in the small cities can have the best that the drama affords for a small sum. The laborer is conveyed for miles to his work for a nickel. The modern school is equipped as no king could fit up quarters for his children two hundred years ago.

The men and women of the present day are spoiled. They have so much that they cry for the moon. Because, for a cent they

have the news of the world to read; because, for five cents they are whirled from one town to another; because they are warm and well-fed they grow peevish and demand the unattainable. Yes, we have sickness, poverty, discomfort, but not even one per cent of what the children of men bore in past centuries. Thank God you are living today.

THE BLACK MAN.

THE Governor of South Carolina has been indulging in violent vaporings on the race question and various editors have criticized his utterances in terms scarcely less vitriolic. It is strange that these grizzled veterans of the press, who have been dealing with "roorbacks" and other political dodges time out of mind, failed to discern the Ethiopian in that particular wood-pile. Appealing to race prejudice for votes is surely nothing new in our "fierce democracie." This brand of it, however, is dangerous; it is liable to enlarge that foul blot on our civilization—burning negroes alive.

The North was wrought up over slavery as never before or since. No other issue produced so much enthusiasm, eloquence and poetry—real and alleged. It was the berseker madness of a self-contained people, for what men and women in their sober senses would take "Uncle Tom's Cabin" for realism or that

masterpiece of fustian: "The Battle Hymn of the Republic," for poetry! Righteous indignation was all the easier, because few Northern communities knew anything about the discomforts of a negro majority. Beneath all the high sentiment of that time one feels the presence of the smug satisfaction: "Let the galled jade wince, our withers are unwrung." It was worthy of note then and is now, that those to whom detestation of negro slavery was a religion never blinked at white industrial slavery. Dividends? Of course not!

The North was fired with the mighty principle that no man should own another man—if that other happened to be black—but it seemed to forget that it was a condition, not a theory, that confronted the South; it displayed a marked lack of understanding of, and sympathy with practical Southern problems. The fact was that slavery was a minor issue converted into a shibboleth by animosity. Anyone who reads American history from the Revolution to the Civil War can not fail to see that Mason and Dixon's line separated two hostile policies, that the differences be-

tween the two were not debatable and were bound to come at last to the arbitriment of the sword. Once the fight was on, one side wished to cripple the other and the North made a sort of idol of the negro. As a result of the war, the black man had a vote for which he was not fitted and which he knew not how to use. All the military force of reconstruction and the "carpet-bagger" was powerless to make this anything but a dead-letter law. In many States it is so today and will remain for many a long year.

It was unfortunate that the negroes were not distributed more evenly through the country, for it was precisely because of sectionalism that the North idealized and spoiled the colored man, although in practice and as a class the people of the Northern States are not willing to admit the negro to real equality and hurt his feelings far more than the people of the South. It may be that this problem is incapable of solution, that it is the penalty for a crime against the law of nations, for the slave traffic that placed the black man in an environment where he will always be

an inferior. The pity of it is that he, who was the original victim, is the scapegoat for most of the odium and pain.

One thing is certain, and it should make us less intolerant towards the people of the South—though it can never palliate the horrible barbarities committed against the negro when the white man takes the law into his own hands—if this race question is ever solved, it will be by the Southern people. They know the negro at his best and at his worst. Whoever reads Grady's great speech on "The New South" will be convinced of this, of the deep understanding, a real liking for the son of Ham on the part of the white people of the South. Perhaps the fairest estimate of him recently from Northern lips came from Hon. Morgan J. O'Brien in a speech delivered in New York in 1899 and quoted recently in the Boston Herald:

"No more striking proof is needed of the truth that right principle, more than racial blood, is necessary to the growth of heroes, than we have had exhibited by a race which, though separated from us, yet stands side by side with us in forming our

citizenship. A generation ago it was a race of slaves. Today, it has its representatives among our heroes. Not all the waters of the ocean can make it white, for it wears the burnished livery of the sun. But it earned its place in history by the side of the Irish at Fontenoy and the Old Guard at Waterloo, when the colored regular regiments went up to death on San Juan hill, with their merry eyes twinkling and their white teeth gleaming, singing as they went, 'Climbing up de Golden Stairs.' "

But wipe out the color line! As the speaker says, not all the waters of the ocean can do that. But what we can do is, be honest with the black man, and not take back from him with one hand what we give with the other. To use one code of action when wrought up in enthusiasm or in theoretical discussion and another for everyday life is fatal and unjust to him and to ourselves. This has done more harm than all the intemperate utterances of Southern demagogues.

As a matter of fact, the black man in the Northern States needs no bogus phil-

anthropy. We can well afford to let the South settle the race problem in its own way—providing it is a law-abiding way and not the fashion of the savage. The Governor of South Carolina does not represent Southern sentiment. It is time that the racial hypocrisy of the Sixties were relegated to "innocuous desuetude" together with the waving of "the bloody shirt."

FRIENDSHIP.

PHILOSOPHERS have told us that he who has one or two friends is a fortunate man. They might have said with equal truth that he who possesses one or two perfect diamonds is fortunate. It is indeed a part of the value of all things precious that they are rare.

Again it may be seriously doubted whether one can rightly fulfil the offices of friendship for more than one or two. They who are said to "have many friends" often find in times of stress that they have not even one. Life itself, even the ordinary and uneventful life, is a severe test of the quality of friendship. Think of the gauntlet that an old and tried friend must have run: absence, grief, change of worldly position, misunderstanding, evil minded acquaintances. It is a very labyrinth, a slough of despond, and sometimes the outer rim of an inferno that a man must pass through before he can qualify as the true friend of another.

It may seem strange to dignify ordinary lives as if they were of the fabric of which mankind's deathless stories have been woven. They are. The most moving tragedies, the grandest dramas were originally the simple yet pathetic happenings in the lives of ordinary people, but the world has placed a halo about these stories because they epitomized the human heart and its workings in grief or joy. So the tiny dramas played silently in the hearts of simple folk contain all the elements of true power. They are miniature masterpieces. Each one is a microcosm. Love itself is only a dearer name for the attar of roses of true friendship. It comes to the peasant as it does to the king and it comes not often. Many pretenders and masqueraders may come to one or the other, but when the jollity is over and the rout ended, they all unmask and we know them for what they are.

Some complain that they have no friends. They do not need friends. They really sigh for human props, trouble-carriers, skilled heart-nurses serving without pay. When they speak of friends they

mean traffic-policemen, people who will help them out in difficult situations. With them friendship is a one-sided affair.

Instead of being despondent that we have so few friends, it would be much more pertinent, seeing what unsatisfactory creatures we are, how compacted of selfishness, weakness and meanness, if we were to ask ourselves in all honesty, by what freak of good fortune we ever happened to seem worthy of having even one true friend.

Yet like the prospector in a new mining country, we ought constantly to be on the lookout for friends. No sage can lay down rules for the finding of friends. You may in your pilgrimage through life encounter in early years one who seems to have been designed from the constitution of things to be your friend. The experience has all the charm of fairy-land, the unreality of a dream, the suddenness of a lightning flash, yet the passing years but witness to its truth, that the electric spark flashing between kindred souls made no mistake.

It may be that chance throws you for a time into the company of one of whom you would never think in the guise of a

friend. In exterior he does not measure up to the ideal standard you have set. Yet the unfolding of circumstance, the stress of life, crucial crises reveal to your astonished eyes depths of generosity, riches of unfailing trust of which no living man can ever be really worthy. It was a wise man who said: "Be careful how you treat your enemy, for one day he may be your friend."

Life can never be monotonous or wearisome to the man who hopes to find in a newcomer a friend who will be as true as steel. It is perhaps one of the best of the purely natural joys of living. Yet like the pursuit of the Holy Grail, it must be carried on with purity of intention. If we look for those who will help us on in the world, if we have ulterior motives, it is certain we shall never discover true friends, for our eyes are blinded by our own unworthiness.

Friendship is not demonstrative. It needs not to hang out bulletins that it is unchanged. The world has no business in such matters. These outward advertisements serve very well as the stage settings

of a fiction, like the "amity of nations" or the carefully phrased notes that pass between the rulers of States. It is of the essence of friendship that it should be a calm reality, shunning show yet possessing "the strength of the hills." The time when it has the right to proclaim itself before the world is the time of crisis when others fall away. Then out of the ranks of the time-servers and pretenders stands forth the true friend and proves the quality of his regard. A man is always ennobled by such a proof. It helps him to recognize realities, to appreciate true loyalty. He sees then that if he were to go into the market-place with the wealth of the world at his disposal, he might offer it all and be unable to buy one friend.

Friendship is a grace, a free gift, of which the recipient is never worthy. Therein consists its unique preciousness. Blessed is that day in the life of a man when he can lie down in the evening in the untroubled certainty that he has found a friend. He may well mark that day with a white stone and celebrate its anniversaries. He may live to great age or come

to high position, but he will never receive a higher compliment or a greater gift. God bless our friends!

ENCOURAGEMENT.

HUMAN nature wants so many things that it is useless to make a list of them all, but one thing it needs badly and all the time—encouragement. Not many souls are self-sufficient, do not have their hours of deep depression, and these hours are often crucial ones. Often the failure to make a step forward is a step backward.

I am not speaking of weaklings, but of men and women who know what life is—know it too well. The mask of illusion has been torn off as far as they are concerned and they can see failure grinning before them. They come to that stage where facts defeat them. You can regard facts as the dumb beasts of creation as some writer has it, or you can look on them as arch-charlatans. They are a little of both. But in either case persistent purpose will tame the beasts or expose the charlatans.

There were facts to spare in the household of the man who invented the

vulcanizing of rubber. One of the worst of them was lack of food and money. But he kept on doggedly and at last by accident hit upon the secret he had striven for years to discover. Harriman had his fight with facts years ago and conquered them by his power of imagination. He found out that there are millions to be obtained by the man who can borrow money and make it work hard. Perhaps nothing has been more ridiculed than the foolishness of a man trying to fly. We all remember "Darius Green and His Flying Machine." Newspaper men had great sport some time ago telling about the Wright brothers out in Ohio hopping over the hills on contrivances they called "gliders." The facts were all against the Wright brothers, yet not so long ago one of the Wrights circled over New York and around the Statue of Liberty. These are merely a few instances of the idiocy of being discouraged by facts.

To get back among the common people, the men on your own street, those whom you meet every day; the tyranny of facts is the great evil. Talk seriously to the

first half dozen men you happen to know and you will find they are more or less discouraged. Facts are getting too strong for them. Sickness, loss of work, family troubles are getting on their nerves and spoiling their waking hours. They are really capable of getting the best of these troubles with a little encouragement. There ought to be shops where this admirable quality could be dispensed and experts be ready to give optimistic advice.

If a man once gains a reputation for being able to cheer people up he will be besieged morning, noon and night. People resort to him from all sides. This is one of the secrets of that latest phase of quackery—"Christian Science"—it cheers people up, convinces them that nothing matters and that everything is all right. It is a great idea and capable of much good for most of our troubles are imaginative. The harm came of labelling the thing as a religion and financing it like a patent medicine.

The doctor who cheers his patients never lacks them and they generally recover, for belief in recovery is a great fac-

tor in convalescence. The lawyer who convinces his clients they will win succeeds if he has ordinary ability because he convinces the jury also. The merchant who is an optimist builds up a large business for he infuses his spirit into his assistants and buyers flock to his shop. Now this may all be called moonshine and nonsense, but it is very true nevertheless that the ability to convince people who see failure looming before them that they will succeed does result in success in nine times out of ten.

The capacity of doing things successfully in this world consists largely in beating down facts. Now a man may be born with this capacity or it may be infused into him. This country is an example of the truth. It was not merely the opportunities that it opened to incomers, it was a something they seemed to draw out of American air, a sublime conviction that it was going to be a great country and that they themselves were to have a part in its greatness. Take any one of the thousands of men born to poverty and no prospects who have achieved success in

any line of endeavor. Experience would have spoiled them, but they had no experience and so achieved the impossible. Many of them could never have done this without encouragement at the right time.

The young man or woman who hopes to win fame by writing is considered a joke. If they listen to experience they will remain a joke. It is encouragement that enables them to convert the dream into a reality. Of course ability must be postulated. The sad thing is that much ability comes to naught because it lacks encouragement. Once let a man become penetrated with the idea that he cannot win and he is sure to lose. Now we cannot all be winners. Every battle means so many corpses in the field when all is over. For the majority mediocrity is the portion, but there is no need of putting ourselves in that class while there is an ounce of energy left. Then there is always the chance of helping others more gifted than we, but who are losing courage. If we cannot win ourselves, let us do it by proxy, by enabling someone else to win. Great victories of war and peace, poems that are

immortal, careers that are an inspiration to mankind have come about through encouragement. What boots it that the collaborators fail to get credit? They have fulfilled their destiny in helping some great work to be done.

THE LAND OF JOY.

YOU will not find it on the map, nor will any many-cylindered motor car or bi-plane be of any assistance in the attempt to reach it. Yet the denizens of that land are all around us. They are a sort of secret society, the great company whose pass-word is "joy," but if you are not a member the pass-word will do you no good. The society is so secret that the members do not realize it themselves.

The grimy urchin wandering happily along the noisesome street singing at the top of his voice belongs to the company; you have only to look at him to see it. He will not give the secret away because he knows nothing about it; he has merely the use and enjoyment of it. The gang of brawny laborers on their way to work, chaffing each other and filling the air with rough laughter, give the looker-on no hint of their high standing in that exclusive society. Next is a bevy of schoolgirls

munching candy, giggling and clutching one another after the manner of half-grown women whose lives have not yet been shadowed by sorrow. What dissimilar types! Yet all three live, move and have their being in the Land of Joy.

Some writer, rightly or wrongly, has proposed the theory that the angels do not necessarily live beyond the stars, that the dwellers in the Celestial City may be nearer us than we imagine. We never hear their voices lifted in hymns to the Most High, for our ears are dull. We never catch the smallest glimpse of their flashing beauty, for human eyes behold only gross, material things.

It is not exactly so with the dwellers in the Land of Joy. We can see the glee dancing in the care-free eyes of the boy; we can hear the jovial talk of workers who are healthy and contented, we can even detect happiness beneath the giggle of the schoolgirl, but unless you belong to the mystic company, that is as near as you will get to the secret.

Except for these random occasions, it is rare indeed that one has the chance to

study this phenomenon. Hence, I esteem myself most fortunate that I was privileged to spend an evening with a group made up of charter members. Had you happened in, you might have gone away without suspecting the truth. They were gathered in a tiny restaurant high above the crowded street, a crowd of men at supper. I know little about them except that they fairly radiated good cheer. Across the board flashed an endless succession of jests, interspersed with flurries of song, and deep, honest laughter as some point was well scored. They ate and drank and talked like a crowd of boys out for a frolic. Soon one took up a guitar and began to sing folk-songs filled with blue skies and sunshine. He was a rare comedian, that fellow with the guitar. He could interpret the tarantella with an art and finish that would shame the sinuous ladies who dance Spring songs. He could imitate the lover carolling beneath the balcony of his inamorata until you would think she lived in one of the tall houses across the street. And the others supported him well, all could sing the songs of the South in that

language whose spoken words are as molten music.

Here was the wonder of it. The environment was plain, the men, not of wealth or special cultivation, yet gathered about that table by some subtle gift they radiated gladness. I thought what a priceless boon to thousands in the great city the knowledge of that secret would be, not merely to the homeless wanderers or discontented workmen, but even to the bored audiences in the theatres, the listless diners in exclusive hotels, the dissipated folk who nightly run crazily after enjoyment and paying high, never get it. Here it was after all, in a small dining-room, hidden away on a side street, and these lighthearted singers and jesters, for all their disguise, were of rare fellowship.

Of course it is not a place; it is a state of mind. Some people there are who have not the faculty of it, as certain folk cannot understand or relish music, but there are lands more favored than others in this matter of joy. It is difficult for one to live in Italy and not be influenced by the good-nature and natural gaiety of all

about him. And in Ireland, too, in spite of all the trouble that has come to its people, there is deep in their natures a bubbling spring of joy that overcomes hunger, sadness and an alien rule.

The inventors are racking their brains contriving new mechanical marvels, the financiers are shortening their lives planning new and larger companies, energy is poured out like water that money may be produced in larger quantities. I have no sympathy with all this useless effort. What humanity really needs is geniuses who will devote their gifts to the production and diffusion of joy.

THE AGELESS HEART.

SOMETIME ago I read a story about an old woman who had just lost her husband and whose children were doing their best to comfort her. They hid every reminder of the dead man, never left her alone, tried to cheer her up, hoping in this way to give her consolation.

At last, the old lady, desperate at their well-intended attempts at comforting, contrived a subterfuge to get them all out of the house. When she was alone, her bitter grief came forth in the cry: "Willy, Willy!" He whom she had lost was not the aged man the children had seen borne to the grave, but the handsome, winning young fellow of other years. She was not the old woman they thought her, but the little lass who had linked her life with his. They were all mistaken.

How hard it was to part with him no one but herself could know, and there was but one way to meet her grief, alone. She

ransacked every closet where they had hidden the clothes and well-remembered trinkets of her husband, brought them to their accustomed places and indulged herself in a good cry. After that she felt better.

What fools we are when dealing with old folks! We adopt a policy divided between the comforting of a child and the soothing of a demented person. It is futile, for we mistake the entire condition. The whitening hair, the lagging step, the wrinkled brow delude us and we conjure up an unreal personality and do our best to make that unreality happy.

Grandpa and Grandma sit by the fire outwardly placid and unnoticing. He is bent and feeble, his eye is dim, his speech halting. She, too, is worn with years and peers at us through her thick spectacles. The dear old couple, what a picture they make and how many sentimental remarks they occasion! We feel moved to give them encouragement and use that tenderly patronizing tone reserved for the very young. We soften things down for them, offer platitudes

which we fondly think are appreciated and then go back to our families with feelings of conscious rectitude.

What a deplorable lack of insight! Why that old man sees what is utterly beyond our ken. Before him is a wisp of a girl with hair that will not be confined and eyes that are dancing. She enacts every mood of an April day, flouts and jeers him tenderly just for the fun of consoling him in a way she alone knows. Her quiet words that are so familiar to the younger members of the family are transfigured for him. The reason his eyes look dim is that he is always looking backward.

Grandma knits quietly. You would never suspect her thoughts. Women are deceivers ever and the best of them deceive the most. They make us think they are well when they are racked with pain, they smile when their hearts are breaking, they console when the whole world is a wilderness of bitterness to them. So Grandma fools us all. She understands completely the wiles of the young people and smiles internally. Teach Grandma!

She will never give herself away, but in her heart this is what she sees:

Across the chimney-corner is a well-knit, ruddy boy, half-confident and half-afraid. His eyes are bright and teeth shining in a familiar smile. She keeps him in a condition of delightful impatience. A handsome youth, so kind, so weak, so strong, so hot-tempered and yet humble! How many tasks he has done, how many presents he has given just to behold that look in her eyes! Yes, Grandma sees many things that escape us, through those thick spectacles.

The human heart never grows old; it is as tender and delicate at seventy as at seventeen. The frame grows old, the senses are dulled, a gentle patience diffuses itself through the body, but the affections are unchanged. You have often heard old people say that fifty years seemed but a short time; the reason is that in a certain sense, they are still in the living present of long ago.

Aged folk understand each other, for they know they are really not old at all, only seemingly so. But they are wary and

keep this to themselves. This phenomenon recalls many of the familiar tales of enchantment, of men and women changed in outward form by the power of some magic; but you will remark that in all such stories, it is only the body that is changed in some grotesque manner; the mind, the soul remain the same. Time, the magician touches the boys and girls of yesterday with his wand and, as it seems, all the outward characteristics of youth disappear; the quick energy, the alert senses, the attractiveness of feature and form. But the spell of the magician stops there.

The sons want Grandma to move out of the little house in the country and take an apartment where she will have comfort and care. It will be so convenient for her, so nice to have young people about. But Grandma will have nothing to do with the plan. Here is the home to which her husband brought her years ago. Every board in the floor is dear to her, every tree and shrub have a message and delightful memory. Here she can sit and wait for him to come home, though he comes no more.

The familiar surroundings help her to keep on living. Where on earth can she find the comfort, the peace and joy that center in this little house? In the tales of enchantment the spell is always lifted finally, and the hero and heroine after their vicissitudes return to their original guise. The aged wait for that return.

While we are young it is useless to try and enter the world of the old. We shall enter in time. But let us not make the mistake of thinking the dim eyes and wrinkled cheeks tell the whole story. They are only folds of the veil that time has gradually draped over the foreheads and shoulders and down to the feet of those who in reality are ever young.

IN MEMORIAM.

STOOD this week by the open grave of one of the sweetest and bravest Christian women I have ever known. A few days ago she was with us, full of life and anticipation, diffusing the warmth of her lovable personality, and now we were gathered in the cemetery to pay her the last sorrowful tribute.

As the earth sifted down upon the coffin, I looked back through the mist of unbidden tears on the radiant years of our flawless friendship. The thronging memories flashed by, each touched anew with sad beauty by the pathos of the scene and the realization that the word, finis, had been written in the record of a singularly unselfish and noble life.

I saw her again as the care-free girl in the garden spot by the sea she loved so well, her eyes twinkling with merriment, her laugh like the tinkle of tiny bells, her mind busy on whatever would bring joy to

those about her; as the happy bride kneeling before the good old Bishop beside the man of her choice; as the young mother glad in the baptism of her first born; as the gracious hostess whose smile was a sunbeam and whose welcome held an incommunicable charm.

In the old streets of European cities there are little shrines set up in the walls of houses, recalling to the wayfarer the Friends of God. So, in a city where one has lived a long time certain houses are shrines of friendship. Time may change or destroy, Death may work his will, but whenever one passes the familiar portals, he beholds the vivid picture of hospitality and goodly converse, of geniality and heart-felt fellowship. When the heedless car sweeps me past the house which was so long to me the house of my friends, friends among a thousand, I see her in fancy standing at the door and feel that hand-clasp whose reality I shall never know again. The old house we laughingly abused and wanted to turn around to face the sunlight, means nothing to the hurry-

ing throngs or to those who live there now, but to me it is a shrine.

As the earth sifted down upon the coffin I thought of many in the graves near her's who in life had loved her, warmed to the touch of her hand, felt the consolation of her voice, the inspiration of her generous activity. As I looked about on the men and women who sould not bear to leave her until the inevitable moment, I saw on every side those who were better that she had lived, who had received of her kind offices and smiling encouragement. As I looked back at the city from which we had come, I thought of the many households saddened by her loss, of the poor who would miss her. Then came the crashing vision of the stricken home from which she had been borne, the husband left to fight the battle alone, the little ones who must grow up without the kisses that only a mother can give, the tender touches that to all others are a Lost Art. There are many sad sounds in this weary world and one of the saddest of all is the fall of the clods on the coffin of a beloved friend.

All her life pain had walked beside her,

but she always smiled. She could bear her own troubles unfalteringly; it was only the pain of others that saddened her. The ideal happiness of her own life opened her heart to those who were in misery. She was never too tired to respond to the call of duty or charity. The thought of little children in winter without shoes oppressed her, until the want was supplied. The poor must have their Christmas dinner even if she had to go without her own. Wherever there was death or sorrow among her acquaintances you would be sure to see her. As a wife and mother she was a gift of God to her husband. In truth it could be carved on her tomb-stone that she lived for others.

In every large duty large or small she showed that fine conscientiousness that does all things well. I shall always think of her as bearing gifts, not merely the material ones whose great value consists in the good heart that prompts the giving, but the better gifts of kindness, sympathy and encouragement. She never failed to find an excuse for those who offended, a charitable explanation for the words that

hurt her. She would go all the way on the road of forgiveness and was grieved only when forgiveness failed.

In all the years I counted her my friend. from the first day we met until she died, there was never a time of joy or sorrow in my life that she did not give unstintingly of her congratulation, her consolation, and all the time, in full measure and overflowing, of her abiding friendship. She was to all who knew her a constant inspiration to long-suffering, self-sacrifice and charity. God be blessed for such friends and vouchsafe resignation when the parting comes!

They laid her out in the sunny south parlor beneath the picture of the Lord whose uplifted fingers seemed to bless her in death. The flowers sent by her friends carpeted the floor, but there was one rose blossom on her quiet breast. They told me it bloomed in her garden the day she died. I would put nothing beside that rose, but in remembrance of a thousand deeds of kindness, in recognition of the best that life can give and death take away, pure, noble Catholic womanhood, I lay this sprig of rosemary in spirit on her grave and

pray that God may grant unto her eternal rest and that the light of His love may shine upon her forever.

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